REPORT RESUMES

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ROLE CONFLICTS OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS.
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DESCRIPTORS- *ROLE PLAYING, *ROLE CONFLICTS, *BEHAVIOR, SOCIOLOGY, *PRINCIPALS, PUBLIC EDUCATION, URBAN SCHOOLS, *SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION, COGNITIVE PROCESSES, ADMINISTRATOR ATTITUDES, TEACHER ATTITUDES, STUDENT ATTITUDES, PARENT ATTITUDES, CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY WAS TO ISOLATE THE ROLE CONFLICTS TO WHICH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS ARE EXPOSED, THE METHODS USED TO RESOLVE THEM, AND THE FREQUENCY WITH WHICH THEY OCCUR. THE SOCIAL MATRIX OF ROLE CONFLICT IS BASED ON DIFFERING EXPECTATIONS OF COGNITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERPRETATIONS. THUS, WHEN PARENTS, STUDENTS, TEACHERS, OTHER ADMINISTRATORS, AND OTHERS WITH WHOM THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL WORKS AND ASSOCIATES HOLD CONFLICTING EXPECTATIONS FOR THE PRINCIPAL'S BEHAVIOR, HE WOULD BE CONFRONTED WITH A SITUATION OF ROLE CONFLICT. THE DATA CONSISTED PRIMARILY OF OVER 500 INDIVIDUAL PRINCIPAL REPORTS OF THE CONFLICTS THEY EXPERIENCED AND OF THEIR GENERAL SCHOOL SITUATIONS. THIS REPORT REPRESENTS THE LAST OF FOUR MONOGRAPHS THAT PRESENTED THE FINDINGS OF THE NATIONAL PRINCIPALSHIP STUDY, "A COMPREHENSIVE INVESTIGATION OF THE ROLE OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS IN PUBLIC EDUCATION." THREE SPECIFIC SETS OF COUNTER-POSITIONS WERE INVESTIGATED--(1) TEACHERS AND PARENTS, (2) TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS, AND (3) TEACHERS VERSUS OTHER TEACHERS. EXPOSURE TO TEACHER-PARENT CONFLICT WAS MOST FREQUENTLY REPORTED BY THE PRINCIPALS, AND SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS SHOWED MORE EXPOSURE TO CONFLICTS FOR ALL SETS OF COUNTER-POSITIONS THAN ELEMENTARY PRINCIPALS. MEN PRINCIPALS WERE FOUND TO BE MORE FREQUENTLY EXPOSED TO ROLE CONFLICT THAN WOMEN IN THIS AREA. CONFLICT ALSO TENDED TO DECREASE THE AMOUNT OF JOB SATISFACTION AND TO INCREASE OCCUPATIONAL WORRIES FOR BOTH SEXES. THE FINDINGS OF THIS STUDY INDICATED THE NEED FOR FURTHER SYSTEMATIC EXAMINATIONS OF THE DETERMINANTS AND EFFECTS OF ROLE CONFLICTS FOR ALL ORGANIZATIONS. (JH)

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NATIONAL PRINCIPALSHIP STUDY

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FOREWORD TO THE STUDY

This is the fourth and final report of a series presenting the results of the National Principalship Study, a research program in the sociology of education sponsored by Harvard University and performed under Contract SAE-8702 with the Cooperative Research Branch, U. S. Office of Education, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. It presents the findings of the part of the Study that focused on the role conflicts experienced by principals as the executives of their schools. Earlier reports have presented the findings that resulted from the staff's examination of other major problems of the Study: (1) the effects and determinants of the professional leadership exhibited by principals; (2) the role performance and reactions to their work of men and women as school administrators; and (3) the determinants and effects of selected dimensions of the principals' administrative performance.

A year of preliminary planning was devoted to the design of the total Study. This phase of the research was performed under Contract SAE-8371 with the Cooperative Research Branch, U. S. Office of Education. A second proposal was then submitted to the Cooperative Research Branch for support of a nation-wide study of principals in city school systems, one that would also involve their teachers and their higher administrators. It was approved in the summer of 1960. The field-work phase of the Study was initiated in the latter part of 1960 and completed in the spring of 1961.

Since the inquiry reported in these pages as well as the other investigations of the National Principalship Study were conducted as part of a large-scale research program, it would not have been possible

to undertake or complete them without the cooperation and collaboration of a large number of individuals. As Director of the Study, I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to the senior staff: Peter C. Dodd, Robert Dreeben, Robert E. Herriott, Joseph L. Hozid, Paul E. Kelly, Keith W. Prichard, Anne E. Trask, and Dean K. Whitla. In addition to participating in the design of the over-all Study, they prepared research materials, supervised field work activities in many cities, and conducted most of the interviews. The senior staff also served as editors and coders (or supervisors of coding) for both the questionnaire and interview data. Robert Dreeben assumed major responsibility for coding the open-ended interview materials and Peter C. Dodd, Joseph L. Hozid, and Anne E. Trask worked closely with him in this activity. Robert E. Herriott coordinated the development of the many research instruments and supervised the extensive computer programming, data reduction, and statistical analyses for the many parts of the Study. His skills in research methodology contributed to the research in numerous ways. Keith W. Prichard and Paul E. Kelly reviewed relevant bodies of social science and educational literature with considerable skill. Dean K. Whitla had primary responsibility for developing and carrying out the sampling procedures. He also served as Associate Director of the Study during the first two years of the research program.

The following individuals provided valuable services as research assistants during different periods of the Study: Philip S. Bonacich, Hugh Cline, Nathan Gross, David Hill, George W. Perry, Nancy St. John, Norman A. Sprinthall, and Larry A. Weiss.

The staff was advised at several crucial stages of the inquiry on various statistical problems by the following individuals: Hubert M. Blalock, William G. Cochran, John B. Carroll, Arthur P. Dempster, C. Frederick Mosteller, Howard Raiffa, and John Tukey. Their cooperation and advice is acknowledged with considerable gratitude.

I am also indebted to the following individuals who augmented the senior staff in the data collection phase of the Study: John Clark, James M. Coffee, Mario D. Fantini, Harold L. Hodgkinson, and Miriam Lieber.

In addition, a number of Harvard Faculty Aides provided many helpful services to the Study. These include: Stephen Call, William L. Hamilton, Walter O. Jewell, III, Jeffrey Jordan, David Napior, Frank Newman, Roger D. Olney, Douglas Ridge, and Sanford Ungar. Stephen Call and Walter O. Jewell, III, deserve special recognition in this connection for the outstanding services they rendered in the program development and data processing phases of the Study.

Richard Labrie and Charles Cantor of the Harvard Statistical Laboratory were also of considerable assistance in developing computer programs to facilitate the data processing phase of the work. I am particularly indebted to Michael V. Solomita of the M.I.T. Computation Center and Robert Burns of the Harvard Computing Center for their assistance in making arrangements for data processing.

Important clerical or computational tasks were performed by: Virginia Coates, Cynthia W. Cole, Edward Copeland, Roger Hussey, Jane Kelly, Annette B. Miller, and Antoinette Shelter.

Marion L. Crowley served as the secretary of the Study, and I am indebted to her for her many valuable contributions. Charlene Worth, too, ably carried out her many secretarial and related responsibilities.

Five hundred and one principals, 3,367 teachers, and 128 higher administrators in 41 large American cities participated in the Study. Without the full cooperation of these educators and the endorsement and support of the Study by their school superintendents and school boards, it would not have been possible to undertake the research program. My associates and I are greatly appreciative of their interest in this endeavor and the time and effort they devoted to it. We hope the research findings presented in this and the other reports of the Study will constitute some repayment for their cooperation.

From its inception, a major substantive interest of Peter C. Dodd in the National Principalship Study focused on the role conflict of principals and its correlates. His doctoral dissertation in the Department of Social Relations at Harvard University was devoted to this problem area. This monograph reports the major findings that emerged from his inquiry.

Neal Gross

Acknowledgements

As noted in the Foreword, this study was carried out as part of a larger research project, the National Principalship Study, which was financed by the U. S. Office of Education under a contract to the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Final analyses for the present study were performed by the Computation Center of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

I owe more than I can say to the director of the National Principalship Study, Neal Gross. As supervisor, intellectual mentor, and friend, he has helped me to avoid many errors. The remaining faults are not his. To my colleagues on the National Principalship Study, I acknowledge a deep obligation for their assistance: Robert Dreeben, David Hill, Joseph L. Hozid, Paul E. Kelly, Keith W. Prichard, Anne E. Trask, and Dean K. Whitla. I also wish to acknowledge the special help provided by Robert E. Herriott in the design and the execution of the analysis.

I am very grateful to Carol Cross who typed the first draft of this report and to Marion L. Crowley and Charlene Worth for typing the final report. One additional person has provided the most important kind of support. To my wife, Erica, goes my enduring gratitude for her patience, editorial comments, and thoughtfulness.

Peter C. Dodd

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Chapter 1: The Plan of the Study

This study is about role conflict as it is experienced by principals of public schools in American cities. The principal's position involves him in dealings with many different people: parents, students, teachers, and other administrators. When these people hold conflicting expectations for the principal's behavior, he is confronted with a situation of role conflict.

We will attempt to ascertain how frequently role conflicts occur and how much of a problem they pose for the principal. We will also present a set of hypotheses dealing with determinants and consequences of role conflict. The hypotheses will be tested by data obtained from 501 principals of urban schools in the United States who participated in the National Principalship Study.

The analysis will focus on the social matrix of role conflict, including the organizational factors that may be related to conflict. We will also examine the impact of the role conflicts on the principal who experiences them. The data will consist primarily of the principal's report of the conflicts and of his school situation.

Since role conflict is the central concern of this study, it is important to define it and related terms at the outset.[1] The principal occupies a position, the principalship, in an organization, the public school. He interacts with persons in a variety of other positions: students, teachers, parents, and his administrative superiors. A general term for these "other positions" is counter-positions, in contrast to the focal position of the principalship. (If we were interested in one of the counter-positions, such as the teacher's, it would be designated as the focal position, and the principalship would become a counter-position.)

Persons occupying the counter-positions hold expectations for the principal's behavior. When the expectations are compatible, the situation he faces is one of role congruency. When two or more incumbents of a counter-position(s) hold simultaneous expectations for him that are incompatible, he cannot conform to both of them. When exposed to such a situation he is confronted with role conflict. Ordinarily, the principal exposed to a role conflict will choose a course of action intended to resolve the conflict. His choice and his subsequent action constitute his resolution of the role conflict.

This brief vocabulary - focal position, counter-position, expectation, role congruency, role conflict, and resolution - will suffice for the present. A more extensive set of terms will be presented later in connection with the derivation of the hypotheses.

The study as a whole is divided into two main parts. Part I consists of Chapters Two through Five, covering the background, theory, and method of the study. Part II consists of Chapters Six through Nine and reports our findings on the incidence, determinants, and effects of role conflict in the school principalship.

In Chapter Two, we review the literature in the area of role conflict in order to show how the present study builds on previous work and how we hope to extend our knowledge of the phenomenon of role conflict.

Chapter Three describes the situation of the principalship and points to some potential points of strain in the role. Characteristics of the school and its key positions are examined that may serve as factors conducive to role strain.

A set of hypotheses about the determinants and effects of role conflict is presented in Chapter Four. In Chapter Five, the research methods of the study are described. We shall consider the design of the Role Conflict instrument, the sample procedure, and our field work activities.

Chapter Six presents our findings about the principal's exposure and reaction to role conflicts. In Chapter Seven a series of hypotheses on the determinants of role conflict is tested, and an interpretation of the results are offered. In Chapter Eight we present our findings about the consequences of conflict.

Chapter Nine summarizes the results of the study and advances some suggestions for future work in the area of role conflict.

Notes and References for Chapter One

1. The formulation of the problem of role conflict and the terms employed here are drawn from another study of roles and role conflict. See Neal Gross, Ward S. Mason and Alexander W. McEachern, Exploerations in Role Analysis: Studies of the School Superintendency Role (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1958), Chapter Four. A more extensive set of definitions is also presented in Chapter Four of the present study.

Chapter 2: Previous Research on Role Conflict

Although the study of conflict has occupied a large place in the literature of social science, the more specialized subject of role conflict has received the attention of social scientists only in recent years.[1] A careful formulation of the problem of role conflict awaited an adequate definition of the concept of role.[2] The definition of role in terms of the expectations held for the incumbent of a position led to the consideration of the situation of conflicting expectations, or role conflict.

Research on the topic of role conflict has focused on three related questions. One is the resolution of the conflict, the action taken by the person who is exposed to the conflicting expectations. A second question asks about the determinants of role conflict: the kinds of situations that generate conflict and the kinds of persons that are most frequently exposed to it. A third question inquiries into the effects of experiencing role conflict for the person who is exposed to it.[3]

The present study is concerned with the determinants and effects of role conflict.[4] Previous research, however, has been primarily concerned with the question of the resolution of role conflict. We shall therefore consider the topic of resolution before reviewing the literature on the determinants and effects of role conflict.

The Resolution of Role Conflict

The first formulations of the problem of role conflict were concerned with the person who occupies two different positions (such as husband and employee) and must meet a set of role expectations attached to each position.[5] On occasion, the two sets of expectations may not be compatible with each other: as husband, for example, a man may be expected home for dinner while at the same time, as employee, he may be expected to work late at the office. This person is confronted with a situation of role conflict, and he must resolve it in some manner. Because it involves expectations attached to two different positions, this situation may be called inter-role conflict.

A number of investigators have studied the resolution of inter-role conflict. Stouffer devised situations where respondents were confronted with this type of conflict and asked how they would resolve it.[6] Stouffer concluded that the respondents' choice of resolution was associated with their personality characteristics. Using a similar technique, Mishler also related personality characteristics to the resolution of role conflict and found that personality dimensions interact to produce a preference for a mode of resolution.[7] For example, a universalistic mode of resolution might be chosen by persons possessing either of two types of personality.

Reasoning theoretically about the problem, Parsons suggested that the actor exposed to severe conflict might choose a deviant form of behavior by failing to fulfill at least one of the two sets of role expectations.[8] Toby has also identified a number of techniques that the individual may employ to resolve the conflict, and each technique carries with it certain penalties and some degree of deviance.[9] The actor may use an "excuse" derived from other roles or from generally accepted values. He may plead an "accident," become ill, or escape from the situation of conflict in other ways.

Parsons' consideration of conflicting expectations permits the extension of the idea of role conflict from inter-role to intra-role conflict.[10] Conflict may occur for an individual occupying a single position, as we have indicated in Chapter One. Intra-role conflict arises when the occupants of counter-positions fail to agree on the expectations that they hold for the occupant of a single focal position. An example of an intra-role conflict is the situation of the principal whose teachers expect him to discipline a group of students, while the parents of the students expect him to show lenience toward them.

The first interest in intra-role conflict arose in connection with studies in industry.[11] Whyte and Gardner pointed out that the foreman in an industrial plant, because of his position, must meet the expectations of both the management and the employees. These expectations, they reasoned, might often be incompatible and expose the foreman to role conflict. Interviews with foremen revealed that they were frequently exposed to role conflict and that they had developed a number of techniques for resolving the conflict.

The study of foremen raises two points of interest. The first is that Whyte and Gardner did not assume that the respondent necessarily perceives the conflicting expectations. They treated the perception of role conflict as a variable and assumed that some persons might perceive that they were exposed to a conflict while others might not. The second point is that Whyte and Gardner inquired into role conflicts that the respondent had actually experienced. This emphasis on actual experience contrasts with the method used by Stouffer, where the respondent was asked how he would resolve a situation of conflict that had been devised by the investigator. The situations Stouffer used were plausible and of the type to which the respondent could be exposed, but they were hypothetical situations.

These studies stimulated investigators to inquire into the methods of resolution of intra-role conflict used by occupants of a number of different positions: army non-commissioned officers, middle management executives, public school teachers, public school superintendents, reformatory inmates, and highway patrolmen.[12] Inter-role conflict has been studied for such pairs of positions as: examination proctor and personal friend; ordained minister and military officer; teacher and military officer; foreman and union official.[13] Considerable knowledge has been accumulated about the types of role conflicts associated with these positions and modes of role conflict resolution. Much of the knowledge, however, was specific to the particular position or pair of positions under study. Until 1958 there was a dearth of theoretical speculation about the general problem of the resolution of role conflict.

In 1958, a systematic theory of role conflict resolution was presented by Gross, Mason, and McEachern.[14] It utilized a combination of situational variables (concerning the nature of the expectations) and personality variables to predict an individual's choice of conflict resolution. Tested on a sample of school superintendents, the theory yielded highly accurate predictions for both intra- and inter-role

role conflicts. The research covered conflicts that had been actually experienced by the superintendents, but the theory was constructed so as to include "hypothetical" role conflicts as well.

While the question of the resolution of role conflict has received much attention from social scientists, the determinants of conflict have not been so extensively studied. A knowledge of the determinants, however, is also important to an understanding of the general problem of role conflict.

The Determinants of Role Conflict

Among the possible determinants of role conflict, two broad classes may be identified: the characteristics of the person that predispose him to experience role conflict, and the characteristics of the social system that generate (or inhibit) the development of conflict.

The empirical research on role conflict contains little information on the first class of determinants. Two exceptions are the studies reported by Getzels and Guba. They found that reports of role conflict are more frequent among the following groups of public school teachers:

(1) men teachers;

(2) teachers who have another part-time job;

(3) teachers who come from a community which is different in character from the community in which they now live and work;

(4) teachers who have fewer friends than they would like to have;

(5) teachers who would not enter the profession of teaching again, if they were to make the decision now.

Getzels and Guba conclude that:

> There are systematic relationships between certain personal characteristics of teachers and their liability to role conflicts in the teaching situation. . .the observed relationships are entirely logical and meaningful.[15]

In a study of military officer-instructors, Getzels and Guba related reports of role conflict to personality characteristics of the officer.[16] They found that persons reporting frequent exposure to role conflict tended to be more authoritarian and ethnocentric than persons reporting infrequent exposure.

The second class of determinants of role conflict is the characteristics of the social system. Merton has discussed in some detail the ways in which social systems affect the degree of role conflict to which persons are exposed.[17] For instance, the factor of visibility may increase the person's exposure to conflicting expectations. If the actions of a person occupying a position are highly visible to persons in counter-positions, he will be more sensitive to their expectations and hence to any incompatibility in the expectations. On the other hand, low visibility may reduce the individual's exposure to conflicting expectations.

The two studies by Getzels and Guba also present findings that bear on the question of social system determinants. They found that certain conflicts are more frequently reported by teachers in communities with low salaries, in rural communities, or in schools with particular types of administrative procedures.[18] In the case of the military officer-instructors, role conflicts were more frequently reported by instructors in schools that emphasized "civilian" subjects (such as law or accounting) than in schools that emphasized "military" subjects (such as field operations and tactics).

While the findings reported by Getzels and Guba relate to the particular roles studied, they suggest a large number of personal and social system determinants of role conflict. The present study will utilize these suggestions in examining the role of the public school principal.

The Effects of Role Conflict

In addition to the determinants and the resolution of role conflict, it is important to consider the effects of conflict. The determinants of role conflict have been classified into those relating to the person and those relating to the social system. It would be possible to classify the effects of role conflict in the same way. There is, however, virtually no empirical research on the topic of the social system effects of role conflict, and consideration of this topic is beyond the limits of the present study.[19] We will be concerned only with the effects that role conflict may have on the person who experiences it.

In general, the research on role conflict has assumed that persons exposed to conflict seek to reduce it. This assumption implies that exposure to conflict has undesirable consequences for those who experience it. The person exposed to role conflict must choose between one of two sets of expectations. One set of expectations will go partially or completely unmet, and the person holding those expectations is likely to apply negative sanctions to him.

Two studies inquire into the extent of the negative sanctions and their effect on individuals exposed to them. As noted previously, Getzels and Guba, in their study of public school teachers, found that exposure to conflict was more frequent among teachers who had few friends, who had part-time jobs, who came from different communities, and who would not re-enter teaching. These characteristics may be effects of exposure to role conflict, for they depict a person alienated from his work and his environment, in a type of deviance that other writers have seen as a response to role conflict.[20]

A direct assessment of the effects of role conflict was made by Gross, Mason, and McEachern.[21] They found that school superintendents frequently report anxiety in connection with exposure to role conflict. Further, the superintendents who reported exposure to role conflict tended to be less satisfied with their jobs and their careers and to worry more about their work.

The findings of both these studies support the proposition that exposure to role conflict has undesirable consequences for the person experiencing the conflict. Exposure to role conflict also may have consequences for the behavior of individuals. A relevant finding is reported by Seeman in another study of school superintendents.[22] He assessed the superintendent's concern over role conflicts and the administrative performance of the superintendent (as judged by his subordinates). The degree of concern over role conflict was related to dominance, social distance, communicativeness, and receptivity to change.

Although the relationships were not strong, they indicated the possibility of association between exposure to role conflict and role performance.

This review of previous research has shown that the topic of the resolution of role conflict has been extensively investigated, whereas less is known about the determinants and the effects. Accordingly, this study is devoted to a consideration of some possible determinants and effects of role conflict.

Notes and References for Chapter 2

1. One of the first intensive empirical studies of role conflict was carried out by Stouffer shortly after World War II. Initially he used the designation of "conflicting social norms" rather than the briefer "role conflict." Cf. Samuel A. Stouffer, "An Analysis of Conflicting Social Norms," *American Sociological Review*, 14 (1949), pp. 707-717.

2. Two comprehensive treatments of the topic of social role are: Theodore R. Sarbin, "Role Theory," in Gardner Lindzey (Editor), *Handbook of Social Psychology*, Vol. I (Cambridge: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1954), pp. 223-258; and Neal Gross, Ward S. Mason, and Alexander W. McEachern, *Explorations in Role Analysis: Studies of the School Superintendency Role* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1958), pp. 11-75.

3. The distinction between determinants and effects of role conflict, while theoretically clear, is often difficult to maintain in empirical research. The terms imply a temporal sequence of determinant followed by the occurrence of the role conflict, which is in turn followed by its effects. Such a sequence is not empirically observable in studies such as the present one that depend on data from a single research survey. The empirical evidence is in terms of phenomena reported at the same time as the reports of role conflict. Analysis of the phenomena, however, may assume a temporal sequence of determinant, occurrence of conflict, and effect. A discussion of the merits and dangers of this assumption is to be found in Herbert Hyman, *Survey*

Design and Analysis (Glencoe: Free Press, 1955), pp. 193-226.

4. Information on the resolution of role conflict was collected by the staff of the National Principalship Study and may be analyzed at a later time.

5. Stouffer, op. cit.; also Samuel A. Stouffer and Jackson Toby, "Role Conflict and Personality," American Journal of Sociology, 56 (1951), pp. 395-406.

6. Stouffer, op. cit.

7. Elliot G. Mishler, "Personality Characteristics and the Resolution of Role Conflict," Public Opinion Quarterly, 17 (1953), pp. 115-135. Other studies of the resolution of inter-role conflict include: Waldo W. Burchard, "Role Conflicts of Military Chaplains," American Sociological Review, 19 (1954), pp. 164-175; John T. Gullahorn, "Measuring Role Conflict," American Journal of Sociology, 61 (1956), pp. 299-303; and Bernard C. Rosen, "Conflicting Group Membership: A Study of Parent-Peer Group Cross Pressures," American Sociological Review, 20 (1955), pp. 155-161. More recent studies have included situations of both inter- and intra-role conflict: Gross, Mason, and McEachern, op. cit., Chapters 15, 16, 17; Fremont A. Shull, Jr. and Delbert C. Miller, "Role Conflict Behavior in Administration," unpublished paper presented at the Annual Meetings of the American Sociological Association, 1960; and Howard J. Ehrlich, James W. Rinehart, and John C. Howell, "The Study of Role Conflict: Explorations in Methodology," Sociometry, 25 (1962), pp. 85-97.

8. Talcott Parsons, The Social System (Glencoe: Free Press, 1951), pp. 280-281.

9. Jackson Toby, "Some Variables in Role Conflict Analysis," Social Forces, 30 (1952), pp. 323-327.

10. Parsons, op. cit.; also see Gross, Mason, and McEachern, op. cit., p. 246.

11. Cf. William F. Whyte and Burleigh B. Gardner, "The Man in the Middle: Position and Problems of the Foreman," Applied Anthropology, 4 (1945), pp. 1-28. Later studies of the foreman include: Donald F. Wray, "Marginal Men of Industry: the Foreman," American Journal of Sociology, 54 (1949), pp. 298-301; and Charles R. Walker, Robert H. Guest, and Arthur N. Turner, The Foreman on the Assembly Line (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956).

12. In order, the studies referred to are: Edgar F. Borgatta, "Attitudinal Concomitants to Military Statuses," Social Forces, 33 (1955), pp. 342-347; Shull and Miller, op. cit.; Jacob W. Getzels and Egon G. Guba, "The Structure of Roles and Role Conflict in the Teaching Situation," Journal of Educational Sociology, 29 (1955), pp. 30-39; Gross, Mason, and McEachern, op. cit.; Stanton Wheeler, "Role Conflict in Correctional Communities," in Donald R. Cressey (Editor), The Prison: Studies in Institutional Organization and Change (New York: Holt-Rinehart-Winston, 1961); Ehrlich, Rinehart, and Howell, op. cit.

13. In order, the studies referred to are: Stouffer, op. cit.; Burchard, op. cit.; Getzels and Guba, "Role, Role Conflict and Effectiveness," op. cit.; Gullahorn, op. cit.

14. Gross, Mason, and McEachern, op. cit., Chapter 17. The studies by Shull and Miller, op. cit., and Ehrlich, Rinehart, and

Howell, *op. cit.*, employ the theory advanced by Gross, Mason, and McEachern.

15. Getzels and Guba, "The Structure of Roles. . .," *op. cit.*, p. 39. Getzels and Guba do not attempt to distinguish between determinants and effects of role conflict. Some of the characteristics of teachers who report frequent conflict may be either determinants or effects of exposure to role conflict. For example, a teacher might take on additional part-time work because of dissatisfaction engendered by conflict, or the fact of having another part-time job might expose him to frequent conflict.

16. Jacob W. Getzels and Egon G. Guba, "Role Conflict and Personality," *Journal of Personality*, 24 (1955), pp. 74-85.

17. Robert K. Merton, "The Role-Set: Problems in Sociological Theory," *British Journal of Sociology*, 8 (1957), pp. 106-120.

18. Getzels and Guba, "The Structure of Role. . .," *op. cit.*; "Role, Role Conflict and Effectiveness," *op. cit.*

19. It is anticipated that an analysis of the social system effects of the role conflicts reported by the principals will be undertaken at a later time.

20. Getzels and Guba, "The Structure of Roles. . .," *op. cit.*

21. Gross, Mason, and McEachern, *op. cit.*, pp. 274-280.

22. Melvin Seeman, *Social Status and Leadership* (Columbus: Ohio State University Bureau of Educational Research, 1960), p. 56.

Chapter 3: The School and the Principalship: A Description

The primary interest of this study is in the social matrix of role conflict. Our objectives are to shed light on the conditions that give rise to role conflict, the persons and positions involved, and the effects of role conflict. Our starting point in exploring these questions is to examine the organization of the school and the school system and the tasks of principals and other members of his role set. We now consider some of the major ideas that emerged from our examination of schools as social systems that influenced the design of the study and the formulation of the hypotheses.

The school is an organization, and the principalship a position in that organization. The literature on organizations is vast, as is the literature on schools and school administration, but there have been surprisingly few attempts to characterize the structure of the school as a formal organization.[1] While a detailed description will not be undertaken here, the structure of the school will be outlined, with special attention to the problem of role conflict in the principalship.

The School and the School System[2]

In their main outline, schools and school systems present remarkable uniformity in the United States. There are, of course, a great number of local and regional variations, but the organizational hierarchy, the principal roles, its general goals, bases of support, and division of labor have much in common.

The individual school is normally a self-contained unit in a school system. Each school is divided into a number of classroom units, with a teacher in charge of each classroom and a principal in charge of the school as a whole. The students, all minors and therefore sharply differentiated from the adults, are grouped into age-classes, with an average of 30 students to a group. Outside the organization of the school, but closely connected with it, are the parents of the students. It is important to note that one of the important functions of the school is to act in loco parentis, and its relatively close identification with its clients is one of the unique organizational characteristics of the school. Few organizations "act for" their clients as the school does for the parents of the students. As will be noted later, this parent-school link is stronger at the elementary school level than it is at the secondary school level.

The principal of the school is responsible to a superintendent of schools, an official usually appointed by and responsible to a committee of laymen (the school board or school committee). The superintendent may have direct contact with the individual schools, but some intervening administrative structure, varying with the size of the school system, interposes between the principal and the superintendent. There is some variation as to the arrangement of these intervening layers: some cities have an assistant superintendent for each level of school, while others organize their schools by geographical districts. These variations are important for the present study since they may affect the nature of the principal's interaction with his administrative superiors.

The general outline of the organizational hierarchy is relatively clear: the roles are differentiated, and the line of responsibility is not ambiguous. In considering possible points of strain in these educational organizations, it is important to take into account certain other characteristics of the school and the school system.

The first is the physical and structural isolation of the school from the central administration of the school system. The individual school is physically separate from the school system administration and is usually located at some distance from the administrative offices. The principal may have relatively little direct contact with his administrative superior especially if the latter has a large number of schools under his jurisdiction (as is often the case in the large city systems with which we are concerned). Social isolation tends to be related to physical isolation; in this respect, the position of the principal is comparable to the commander of a detached army unit, the manager of a branch factory or store, or the director of a hospital. Although all these positions might be defined as belonging to "middle management," they differ from the middle-level executive of a large government office, production unit, or other organization. While the line of responsibility is continuous in all organizations, there is here an important structural discontinuity with significant social consequences.

A second characteristic of the school system is the indefinite nature of its goals. In this respect, it is comparable to a large class of organizations (such as hospitals, churches, and social welfare agencies), where the primary product is a service and the organization deals with persons as objects. The goals of such organizations are typically defined in ambiguous and widely acceptable terms (such as "educating the child," "curing the sick," or "serving the needy"), but no single objective criterion is available to assess the effectiveness of the organization. This absence of a single criterion is a characteristic of a great many organizations. It can be contrasted, however, with the case of an organization having a single criterion: a production firm with adequate cost accounting that is operated exclusively on the principle of economic rationality. The contrast is obvious: what are the consequences for persons in the "service" type of organization?

Lortie notes the teacher's continuing concern with the evaluation of product, and he points to some of the effects of continued ambiguity, where the product is so intangible.[3] One of these is the absence of a clear criterion of decision making for action, with a consequent emphasis on experience, intuition, and such relatively indefinite criteria as the welfare of the child. The absence of objective criteria of evaluation is a source of potential conflict for the administrator and, at the same time, it offers him a line of defense. If he cannot "prove" himself right, it is equally difficult to prove him wrong. The ambiguity of purpose, however, does put a stronger emphasis on the legitimation of the administrator's authority than might otherwise be the case. Such legitimation, in the case of the school principal, is normally acquired through experience both as a teacher and as administrator. This suggests the importance of experience in determining the individual's exposure to role conflict and his ability to deal with it.

A third characteristic of the school system is its anchoring in the local community. As a public institution, it requires the support of the local community and is open to the criticism of citizens. There is strong pressure on the administrators to give heed to public demands, to avoid setting precedents, and to abide by explicit written rules wherever possible. Virtually all the school systems in our study have handbooks of rules for the guidance of teachers and administrators. The public nature of the organization has an impact on the principalship in a number of ways, especially in reinforcing demands of parents. They not only make demands on the organization through their position as clients, but they are also able to exert pressure on the school system through their position as citizens.

Another characteristic of the school system is that its higher level positions (principal, assistant superintendent, superintendent) are theoretically open to all persons within the system, subject to certain requirements of training and experience. In practice, mobility may be limited, especially for the women teachers and principals, but it is never totally blocked. The possibility of changing jobs and of promotion is open to all principals, although their reactions to this structural fact may vary in terms of their own career plans.

One last point should be made about the nature of the school: it is an organization in which the line employees are to some degree "professionals," both by self-definition and by the nature of the requirements for the position. The argument about teaching as a profession need not be reviewed here,[4] but the fact that the issue of professionalism is introduced has important consequences for the principal. It limits his authority over the individual teacher, and binds him to respect the professional autonomy of persons who are his subordinates in organizational terms. When this fact is taken in conjunction with the structural isolation of the principalship, it emphasizes the power position of the teachers vis-à-vis the principal, and his need for their support.

This section has presented a general description of the school and the school system, noted some special characteristics of these as formal organizations, and indicated how these characteristics might affect the principal's role. In the following section internal variations in the principal's role and some of the points of strain will be considered.

Variations in the Principalship

Historically, the position of full-time principal is a relatively recent development. With the rapid growth of public education in the 19th century, the need emerged for supervision and a single authority figure in each school.[5] The resulting position of "principal teacher" was primarily administrative rather than supervisory, emphasizing record keeping, maintenance of order, and care for the physical equipment of the school. The high school principalship as a full-time position without teaching duties soon developed, and by 1900 large elementary schools also had a full-time principal. The requirements for such positions were never specific, and formal training for the principalship was not common until after the first World War.

The possibility of careers in administration is, therefore, a relatively new phenomenon in the field of education. Concomitant with this development has been a slow but constant increase in the percentage of men teachers.[6] Although the administrative positions are in no way restricted to men, most full-time principals are men, and a large majority of all higher administrative positions (assistant superintendent and above) are held by men. A similar differentiation by sex may be seen within the principalship: the lowest-status position of teaching principal is held primarily by women.[7] Somewhat higher in status are the elementary school "supervisory" principals, who do no teaching, and here the men are slightly in the majority. In the junior high school, men principals predominate, and in the senior high schools they far outnumber the women. The higher the status of the principal's position, the more likely it is that men will occupy it.

The distribution of the sexes in the educational hierarchy has obvious consequences in terms of career plans and alternatives. Objectively, a man has much greater chances of promotion at almost any point in the hierarchy. Less obvious but equally important is the fact that the men are promoted more rapidly, so that they attain the principalship at a younger age with less experience as teachers.

A second point of internal variation within the principalship, and perhaps the most important, is the level of the school. Schools everywhere are classified into either elementary or secondary schools, with very few schools (except in the rural areas) including both levels.

An additional differentiation is made between junior high (normally grades 7-9) and high school (grades 9-12 or 10-12), although a number of city systems, primarily in the Midwest, do not have junior high schools.

The elementary school as an organization is smaller, less complex, and less prestigious than the secondary school. It has a staff of ten to twenty teachers, and its student body numbers four to six hundred. (The figures given are for the average school.) The teachers although often highly trained are not highly specialized, so that they are able to substitute for each other. The elementary school principal frequently has no administrative assistants and is often short of clerical help; his salary in most school systems is less than that of the secondary school principal.

The secondary school may have several thousand students, and a staff of fifty to a hundred teachers. The teachers are usually organized into departments according to their subject-matter specialty. In addition to the teaching staff, there are a number of non-teaching personnel such as nurses, librarians, counsellors, and clerks. There are usually several independent programs or "tracks," each with its own curriculum (academic, general, commercial, vocational). The secondary school principal must also be responsible for administering an extensive extra-curricular program, including athletics, and for the maintenance of a large physical plant. Typically, he receives a greater salary and much more administrative assistance than the elementary school principal. The large high school may have two, three, or even four assistant principals, in addition to a number of clerks and secretaries.

Within each level of school, there is further differentiation by size of school, with the differences in organization that size entails. In the urban systems, the elementary schools may range from 200 to 4,000 students, while the range for secondary schools is from 600 to 5,000. For the larger schools many of the characteristics of the secondary school apply also to the elementary school: complexity of organization, division of labor, and delegation of duties to assistants.

Duties of the Principalship

Regardless of the level of school, the principal's role comprises a number of duties common to all principals. The following list gives some indication of the extent of these duties:

(1) Management of the instructional program: scheduling of classes and teachers' duties; acquisition and allocation of materials for instruction, such as textbooks and educational aids; evaluation of the program to insure proper coordination both within the school and with other schools; planning and conducting staff meetings.

(2) Dealing with students: counselling, enforcing discipline, passing on placement and promotion recommendations, writing reports, attending student functions.

(3) Housekeeping functions: keeping records, checking school accounts, managing the custodial staff (and often a cafeteria), checking attendance.

(4) Maintaining "external" relations: conferring with parents, assisting the parent-teachers association, working with community agencies.

(5) Dealing with teachers: conferring on personal problems, on instructional problems, helping new and inexperienced teachers, making reports and evaluations.

(6) Reporting to the higher administration: keeping them informed as to the school program and activities; securing approval for new policies; participating in system-wide committees and meetings; arranging for personnel, materials, and services.

The items in this list indicate the range of duties and the role relationships of principals and suggest points of potential strain in a principal's work. We now examine several of the potential stress points that could lead to the principal's exposure to role conflict.

Some Potential Sources of Role Conflict

One possible strain is generated by the principal's position in the middle of the hierarchy, between his subordinates (the teachers) and his superordinates (the school system administrators). In his role actions he must take cognizance of both sets of expectations. Students of industry have pointed to the "man in the middle" position of the foreman, dealing with both employees and management.[8] Insofar as the principal's position in the administrative structure resembles the foreman's, role conflicts may arise from incompatible expectations held for the principal by teachers and administrators.

Another source of strain is to be found in the crossing of social system boundaries. The school itself may be considered a bounded social system, so that interactions between persons belonging to the system (such as teachers) and those not belonging (such as parents) take place across system boundaries. Such interactions are seldom so well regulated and defined as are interactions between members of the same system. A person in a position of responsibility, who must regulate and deal with such cross-boundary interactions, may be confronted with conflicting expectations and role conflict. Such a formulation suggests that conflicting expectations held by teachers and parents may be especially problematic for the principal. Interactions involving persons in the school and those in the central administration also take place across one system boundary (that of the school), but within the boundaries of a larger system (the city school system). Conflicting expectations held by teachers and administrators may cause difficulty for the principal since he must deal with both groups, one within the school and the other outside.[9]

The third possible point of strain is due to a more universal value dilemma, one that may be described as universalism versus particularism.[10] In making decisions, especially those affecting individual students or teachers, the principal must choose between two alternatives: whether to decide the case on its particular merits or on the basis of some general policy. Often some compromise between these two is possible, but they represent a potential strain since in theory they lead to different decisions. There is no clear rule for the principal to follow, and each alternative has its legitimation:

"what's good for the child" against "what's good for the school." Since both are legitimate, they represent expectations that may be held for the principal's actions. The expectations may be incompatible and lead to conflict for the principal.

Although this enumeration is hardly exhaustive, it suggests some points of strain in the principal's role where role conflict may arise. It is also desirable to characterize briefly the categories of persons who may hold these expectations: students, teachers, administrators, and parents.

Positions in the School: Some Relevant Characteristics

An organization implies a set of positions differentiated by task and status. In the school system major positions include those of the principal, teacher, student, and administrator.[11] There is an important position outside the organization but connected with it in a client relationship: the parent. Persons in all of these positions may hold expectations for the principal's actions; when the expectations are mutually incompatible, and salient to the principal, role conflict may result for him.

The social status of the student is relatively low, and the expectations they hold for the principal may have relatively little importance to the latter. The students are not crucial as role definers, but their reactions to the principal's behavior are important in another sense. The principal finds grounds for his actions, especially for his most difficult decision, in the value standard of "the welfare of the student." The student's welfare, however, is defined by the adult (teacher, principal, or parent) and fulfillment of the student's expectations is not a necessary part of his welfare. The expectations held by the students for the principal may play a part in his decisions, but only indirectly, as he considers their total "welfare."

The teachers are probably the most important group that affects the principal's behavior. Although the teachers are subordinate to the principal in the organization, they wield powerful sanctions. A principal who fails to meet the expectations of a majority of his teachers may find his authority severly undermined, if not openly flouted. Many teachers have tenure and can be dismissed or transferred only with difficulty. The principal has at hand a limited number of pressures to apply to the teachers. At the secondary level the teacher is also a specialist in subject matter, often in an area unfamiliar to the principal. Lacking control in technical matters, the principal's authority is weakened and circumscribed. The "technical freedom" may exist even at the elementary level, since many elementary school principals have not taught at this level. Their lack of experience inhibits their control over the teachers and may make it more difficult for them to meet the teachers' expectations.

An additional element of strength in the teacher's position is the definition of his role as a professional one. The control over professionals in a formal organization is a delicate matter, even more so than the control over technical specialists. To the extent that the principal accepts the teacher as a professional person, he must also accept restrictions on his own authority.

The administrators form a third group with whom the principal must deal, and one that exerts authority over him. Since both the administrators' formal approval and their informal support are vital to the principal, their expectations assume critical importance for him. However, the principal has a certain degree of independence from his administrative superiors due to the physical and social isolation of his school. His superordinates are seldom present and his actions are not immediately visible to them. The reduced visibility may tend to decrease the salience of the administrator's expectations, and gives the principal room to maneuver. The degree of visibility and accompanying lack of autonomy vary from school to school and from city to city.

It should be noted that the administrators are a varied group, both by status and by function. The principal is often responsible to sevaral diffrrent administrators, each in a different area, such as curriculum, personnel, maintenance, or accounting. Formally, in terms of the organization chart, his responsibility may be to the superintendent, a person with whom he seldom actually communicates. In the smaller cities, the amount of contact with the immediate superior may be more frequent, but this also varies with the level of the school and the type of hierarchy.

The principal may perceive varying expectations from the higher administration, or he may not perceive any specific expectations. Where the expectations are clearly expressed, as in a memorandum or telephone call, he has little choice but to meet them, since the sanctions for failing to do so are overwhelming. The directions are not always so explicit, and the principal may be uncertain as to what expectations are actually held for him. What he perceives to be the administrators' expectations is decisive in determining whether these expectations conflict with others held for him.

The fourth major category of persons holding expectations for the principal is the parents who have no formal role inside the school organization. As parents and clients, however, they may hold strong expectations for the principal's actions, usually specific to a particular situation. Depending on the nature of the school board and the type of community, the parents may be in a position to apply strong pressure to the principal. Typically, their recourse is indirect, through the offices of the central administration and the school board. Further distinctions about the types of parental involvement in the school are noted in Chapter Four.

In this chapter, a general description of the school and the school system has been presented in order to locate the position of the principal in its organizational context. Some potential points of strain have been identified as possible sources of role conflict for the principal. Several of the major positions have been briefly characterized, with reference to the expectations that persons in these positions may hold for the principal's behavior. From this knowledge of the school and the principalship, specific hypotheses can be derived regarding the sources of conflicting expectations and their effect on the principal. These hypotheses are presented in Chapter Four.

Notes and References for Chapter 3

1. William C. Sayres, "The Singular Society of Loscho," Harvard Educational Review, 27 (1957), pp. 301-310; Talcott Parsons, "The School Class as a Social System" Harvard Educational Review, 29 (1959), pp. 297-318. While C. Wayne Gordon suggests some important points about school organization, he is primarily dealing with student positions in The Social System of the High School (Glencoe: Free Press, 1957).

2. The discussion in this chapter is drawn from a number of sources: Neal Gross, "The Sociology of Education," in Robert K. Merton, Leonard Broom, and Leonard S. Cottrell, Jr. (Editors), Sociology Today (New York: Basic Books, 1959), pp. 128-152; Paul B. Jacobson, William C. Reavis, and James D. Logsdon, The Effective School Principal (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1954); Dan C. Lortie, "Craftsmen and Colleagueship," paper presented at the Annual Meetings of the American Sociological Association, 1961; Parsons, op. cit.; Willard Waller, The Sociology of Teaching (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1932).

3. Lortie, op. cit., pp.7-8.

4. There has been little treatment of public school teaching as a profession by sociologists. A statement of the need for such treatment is to be found in Myron Lieberman, Education as a Profession (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1956).

5. This brief account follows closely that of Jacobson, Reavis, and Logsdon, op. cit., pp. 567ff.

6. U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Biennial

Survey of Education in the United States 1954-56 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1959), Chapter 3, p. 12.

7. "The Elementary School Principalship - A Research Study," Thirty-seventh Yearbook, The National Elementary Principal, Department of Elementary School Principals, National Education Association (1958), pp. 110-111.

8. William F. Whyte and Burleigh B. Gardner, "The Man in the Middle: Position and Problems of the Foreman," Applied Anthropology, 4 (1945), pp. 1-28; Donald F. Wray, "Marginal Men of Industry: The Foreman," American Journal of Sociology, 54 (1949), pp. 298-301; Charles R. Walker, Robert H. Guest, and Arthur N. Turner, The Foreman on the Assembly Line (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956).

9. This formulation resembles the "man in the middle" dilemma advanced above. It differs in that the element of organizational hierarchy is not included, but only the question of system boundaries. The argument about cross-boundary problems reinforces, of course, the argument about the middle-man's position as a point of strain.

10. These terms have been used by a number of writers, most notably Talcott Parsons, The Social System (Glencoe: Free Press, 1951), pp. 42ff. Melvin Seeman has applied them to dilemmas for persons in school systems: "Role Conflict and Ambivalence in Leadership," American Sociological Review, 18 (1953), pp. 373-380.

11. The term "administrator" is used here to denote any official of the city school administration, such as superintendent, deputy superintendent, etc.

Chapter 4: The Hypotheses

In the previous chapter some areas of potential conflict were located: teacher-parent conflict over decisions affecting an individual child, teacher-administrator conflict over decisions affecting the school as a whole, conflicting expectations within the teacher group over such issues as the division of labor and the allocation of resources. In this chapter we present a set of hypotheses about determinants and consequences of role conflict and the rationale on which they are based.

Definition of Terms

An essential preliminary is a clear specification of the terms to be used. These were introduced in Chapter One and are further defined here. In an organization there exists a set of *positions*, differentiated by name, status, and duties. In this analysis a particular position is of interest, the principalship, and this is identified as the *focal* position.[1] Individuals who occupy other positions in the organization with whom the principal relates, such as teachers, students, or higher administrative officials, are described as incumbents of *counter-positions*. Persons occupying counter-positions may hold *expectations* for the behavior of a person in a focal position. These expectations are evaluative standards applied to occupants of a position, such as "A principal should closely supervise new teachers in the school." A *role* is a set of expectations applied to the occupant of a particular position. The person's behavior with reference to the expectations held for him is termed his *role behavior*.

For a focal position such as the principalship, there are a number of counter-positions and many persons occupying them. Each of these persons may hold expectations for the principal's behavior. With so many persons holding expectations for the principal, the possibility arises that the expectations may vary and be incompatible.[2] For example, some persons may expect the principal to supervise new teachers closely, while others expect him to grant maximum freedom to the new teachers.

A situation of role congruence exists when there is little or no difference between the expectations held for the principal. The expectations may differ, however, in such a way as to be mutually incompatible, and in this situation he is forced to choose between the expectations. The principal cannot meet both sets of expectations.[3] When he perceives that incompatible expectations are held for him, with reference to a single situation, he is exposed to role conflict.

When the principal is exposed to role conflict, he must take some action toward resolving the conflict. He must meet one set of expectations or the other or work out some way of coping with the problem. This action constitutes his resolution of the role conflict.[4] Resolution may be very easy for him, especially if one set of expectations is clearly inappropriate or held by a low status person. Resolution may be very difficult, on the other hand, if both expectations are appropriate and held by persons in important counter-positions. An example of a potentially difficult resolution confronts the principal whose administrative superiors expect him to supervise new teachers closely, but whose teachers do not expect close supervision.

We shall designate the difficulty of resolving a role conflict as perceived by the individual exposed to it as its severity. The more the exposure to a particular situation of role conflict creates a serious problem for the principal, the greater its severity.

With reference to the counter-positions involved, two general types of role conflict will be examined. The first type arises when the expectation held by the occupant of one counter-position conflicts with the expectation held by the occupant of another counter-position. An example of this type would be conflicting expectations held by a parent and a teacher. The second type arises when the conflicting expectations are held by different occupants of the same counter-position. An example is the difference of expectations among several teachers as to the proper role behavior for the principal.[5]

The source of role conflict is the set of counter-positions whose occupants hold the incompatible expectations. For the first type of conflict, involving two different counter-positions, the source is the expectations held by teachers and parents. The source for the second type of conflict, involving occupants of a single counter-position, is a situation where different expectations are held by two groups of teachers.

Having defined the central concepts of the study we turn now to the hypotheses to be examined. They fall in two groups: hypotheses 1 and 2 are concerned with possible determinants of the incidence and severity of role conflict and hypotheses 3 and 4 deal with its consequences for school principals.

Sex Role and Role Conflict

To reason about the development of role conflict, we must first consider the circumstances under which expectations differ, become incompatible, and result in conflict.

A starting point is the fact that the expectations held for the behavior of a position incumbent are so often congruent. Conflicting expectations are the exception rather than the rule. Without considerable role congruence, social interchange would be virtually impossible.

The congruence depends on the fact that persons in the focal position and in the counter-position agree on the expectations to be applied to the person in the focal position. A role such as the principalship is defined, and the definition is accepted by occupants of counter-positions, such as parents, teachers, students, and administrators.

It is possible, however, that an occupant of a counter-position may not accept the principal's definition of his role as principal. This dissident, person A, may disagree with the occupant of the focal position on the proper behavior for the latter. Person A's expectations for the principal would then be different from expectations held by other occupants of the same counter-position. The expectations held by person A would also differ from expectations held by occupants of other counter-positions. The greater the difference, the more it is likely that the expectations would be mutually incompatible. When the principal perceives the incompatible expectations he is exposed to role conflict.

This formulation suggests that a key to the development of role conflict is the acceptance, by occupants of counter-positions, of the principal's own definition of his role. When this definition is rejected, the likelihood of conflict increases.

Among the possible determinants of exposure to role conflict, one may be selected that may affect the acceptance by others of the principal's own role definition. For a number of reasons, the sex role of the principal may affect the expectations held for him (or her) as principal. (These reasons will be explained after formally stating the hypothesis.)

It has been argued that rejection of the principal's definition of his own role by occupants of counter-positions increases the likelihood of exposure to role conflict. If men principals are more likely to experience such rejection of their own role definition than women principals, then hypothesis 1 follows:

Hypothesis 1: Men principals will be exposed to role conflict more frequently than women principals.

A difference in career patterns is the first reason why the men principals are more likely to experience rejection of their own role definition and become exposed to role conflict. Men attain the position of principal at a younger age, with less teaching experience than women. Furthermore, their teaching experience has often been at a different level of school: male secondary school teachers are often appointed as elementary school principals. This lack of experience may affect the acceptance, by teachers, parents, and others, of the male principal's definition of his own role.

Owing to the composition of the population of principals, the applicability of hypothesis 1 is restricted to elementary school principals. At this level of school, the numbers of men and women principals are approximately equal. At the secondary school level, the number of women principals in the sample is so small as to make comparisons of doubtful value.

An additional point of difference is that men often move on to other positions in the field of school administration. The women, on the other hand, tend to remain in the principalship for the balance of their careers. The man's commitment to his position as principal tends to be less enduring, and this fact may affect the acceptance of his authority and of his own role definition by occupants of counter-positions.

The sex composition of the elementary school teaching staff may also affect the role conflict experience of the principal. On the average, 88 per cent of the teachers in elementary schools are women.[6] It may be that women principals, on account of their latent sex role, are more able to establish congruence between their own role definition and the expectations held for them by their teachers. Men principals may have more difficulty in establishing such congruence and therefore be more exposed to conflicting expectations.

Level of School and Role Conflict

Another possible determinant of exposure to role conflict is the level of school that the principal administers. In considering the effect of level of school on exposure to conflict, it is important to note the organizational characteristics of schools at the different levels. Three characteristics of schools as organizations may have an impact on the development of role conflict for the principal: the structural complexity of the organization, the visibility of the principal to persons in counter-positions, and the degree of client involvement. We will consider the possible effect of each of these factors in an attempt to arrive at an hypothesis.

The structural complexity of an organization is indicated by its size, by the number of different positions, by the hierarchy of organization, and by the relationships between the positions and the levels of hierarchy. In more complex organizations the occupants of different positions may have specialized skills and technical knowledge. The chief administrator of a complex organization will have to meet the expectations held for him by the occupants of the positions. The range of expectations is likely to be great and the nature of the administrative demands may leave less tolerance for error. In smaller, less complex organizations there are fewer positions, and the administrator has a narrower range of expectations to meet.

Reasoning about structural complexity would thus lead us to predict that secondary school principals would be exposed to role conflict more frequently than elementary school principals. The secondary schools are larger, and the teaching staff is composed of specialists. There are a number of non-teaching positions, such as counsellors, librarians, and administrative assistants. The elementary schools have few specialists and the number of teachers is not large.

Before making a prediction, however, it is important to take into consideration another element in the organization: the visibility of the principal's behavior. Visibility is the degree to which his behavior is known to the persons in counter-positions. If the principal interacts with these persons frequently, his actions are highly visible to them. He is made aware of their expectations for him and is sensitive to any conflicts in the expectations. On the other hand, if his actions are not visible to the persons in counter-positions, and he interacts rarely with them, he will be less aware of their expectations and of conflicts that develop.

The position of the elementary school principal is a relatively exposed one. He interacts with most of his teachers daily and is not separated from them by secretaries or administrative assistants. Similarly, he must deal with parents directly, not through the intermediary of a counsellor. The opposite tends to be true of the secondary principal. He has a much larger staff which limits his interaction with any single individual. He has a secretary and an assistant principal, or even several assistants. These assistants intervene between him and persons in some of the major counter-positions (parents, teachers, students). The secondary school principal's behavior is less visible to the persons in counter-positions, and he interacts with them less frequently.

The differences in visibility lead to a prediction that elementary school principals will be more exposed to role conflict than secondary school principals. On the other hand, the differences in structural complexity suggest that the elementary school principals will be less exposed. Taking into account the probable effects of both visibility and organizational complexity, we would not expect the principals of different levels of school to be exposed to different degrees of role conflict.

The effect of a third factor must also be considered: the degree of client involvement. Clients may be involved in the activities of any organization, and greater involvement may result in the development of role conflict for the chief administrator of the organization. The clients are laymen, lacking in technical competence and obligation to the organization. Their expectations for the administrator may be very different from the expectations held by organization members. The more the clients are involved in the organization's activities, the more opportunity there is for their expectations to conflict with the expectations held by organization members. This logic, applied to the differences between level of school, leads to the following hypothesis:

> Hypothesis 2: When the source of the conflict is the expectations held for the principal by parents and teachers, elementary school principals will be exposed to role conflict more frequently than secondary school principals.

Client involvement is higher in the elementary school because it draws on a neighborhood community so that the parents reside near the school. There is usually a parent-teacher association with meetings in the school building. The functions of teacher and parent are not so sharply differentiated, so that the parents feel more competent to intervene in the educational process. In the secondary (junior high and senior high) schools, on the other hand, the parents are not involved so directly. The schools are larger and the neighborhood ties are weaker, since the school district often includes a number of neighborhoods. The teachers are specialized as to subject matter and the parents less likely to intervene in educational matters. The parents come to the school less often and their involvement with it is less intense.

Of three factors differentiating the level of school, it is expected that two will have opposite effects on the principal's exposure to role conflict. The effects will tend to cancel each other out, and no prediction is made for these two factors - structural complexity and visibility of the principal. The hypothesized effect of a third factor, client involvement, leads to the prediction that elementary school principals will be more exposed to teacher-parent conflict.

The Effects of Role Conflict: Worry and Reduced Job Satisfaction

The first two hypotheses have suggested relationships between possible determinants of role conflict and the principals' exposure to role conflict. It is also of interest to inquire into the possible effects of role conflict.

Some of the possible effects of role conflict will be considered, hypotheses will be advanced, and data on the principals will be used to test the hypotheses.[7] Of all the possible effects, only a few are chosen for examination here in order to limit the field of inquiry.

Exposure to role conflict implies the likelihood of negative consequences for the occupant of the focal position.[8] He is confronted by two sets of expectations and is unable to satisfy both of them. Both expectations cannot be met, and the persons holding the expectations will be disappointed and may attempt to apply negative sanctions to him. Their reactions may take various forms ranging from mild disapproval to the imposition of strong negative sanctions.

A person exposed to conflicting expectations may experience distress and unhappiness because of the negative sanctions to which he is exposed. The more he is exposed to role conflict, as occupant of a particular position, the more he will have a general feeling of unhappiness about his occupancy of that position. In other words, he generalizes from the specific experiences of role conflict to attitudes about his position.

For a person occupying a position in an organization, two important reactions to it are his feeling of satisfaction with his work and his worry about his occupational performance. We contend, then, that an individual's response to his work will be affected by his exposure and reaction to role conflict.

The following hypotheses are a consequence of this type of reasoning:

Hypothesis 3-A: The more frequently a principal is exposed to role conflict the less satisfaction he will derive from his position as principal.

Hypothesis 3-B: The more frequently a principal is exposed to role conflict the more he will worry about aspects of his work.

Hypothesis 3-C: The more strongly a principal reacts to exposure to role conflict the less satisfaction he will derive from his position as principal.

Hypothesis 3-D: The more strongly a principal reacts to exposure to role conflict, the more he will worry about aspects of his work.

Evidence from previous research indicates support for these hypotheses. Getzels and Guba investigated exposure to role conflict in a group of public school teachers and found that exposure was related to a number of specific dissatisfactions, such as the feeling of having chosen the wrong occupation.[9] Gross, Mason, and McEachern report similar findings for school superintendents: exposure to role conflict was related both to worry about their work and reduced satisfaction with their work.[10]

The Effect of Role Conflict on Career Plans

One of the characteristics of the urban school system as an organization is its hierarchy of positions ranging from teacher to superintendent. Depending on the size of the system, there may be a large number of positions at intermediate levels: deputy and associate superintendents, assistant superintendents, specialized consultants (such as curriculum specialists), and various types of principalships. There is relatively open mobility from the principalship to the higher positions, and it is not uncommon for a school principal to move on to any one of them. Frequently, such moves are a planned part of a principal's career.

The desire to move upward is termed here the "level of career aspiration," and the index of it is based on the number and rank of the positions that a principal would like to attain and the intensity with which he wishes to attain the positions. An interesting question is whether experience with role conflict might affect the principal's level of career aspiration and what the nature of the effect might be. Could there be a connection between the structured strains in the position, as indicated by role conflict, and the individual's desire to attain other positions in the organization?

In reasoning about the connection between exposure to role conflict and level of career aspiration, it is assumed that the desire to move upward in the organizational hierarchy has two components. One of these components is positive: the desire to acquire the power, prestige, or increased salary of the higher position. Another component is negative: to move away from the present position in order to leave behind its worries and drawbacks.

We have argued that negative consequences may follow from exposure to role conflict. These consequences, such as reduced job satisfaction and increased worry, should contribute to the negative component of career aspiration. The more a person is dissatisfied with and worries about his present position, the more he will want to move to some other position. To the extent that this dissatisfaction is associated with exposure to role conflict, it should hold that:

Hypothesis 4: The more a principal is exposed to role conflict the more he will tend to seek other positions, as indicated by his level of career aspiration.

A set of hypotheses has been presented as to the possible antecedents and effects of role conflict for a role in a formal organization. These are only a few of many hypotheses that could be derived from sociological and psychological assumptions. It seems preferable, however, to select a limited number of relationships and to reason about each one in some detail. Wherever restrictions have been suggested for the hypothesis, appropriate controls will be made in the course of the analysis. The original hypotheses will then be revised on the basis of the findings.

This chapter has stated the main hypotheses on role conflict in the principalship. In the following chapter the method of the study will be described, including the nature of the sample, the design of the questionnaire, the interviewing, and the problems of processing the data.

Notes and References for Chapter 4

1. For a fuller explanation of the system of concepts used to describe role conflict, see Neal Gross, Ward S. Mason, and Alexander W. McEachern, Explorations in Role Analysis: Studies of the School Superintendency Role (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1958), Chapter 4.

2. For a theoretical discussion of the emergence of conflicting expectations and the way in which these are resolved, see Robert K. Merton, "The Role-Set: Problems in Sociological Theory," British Journal of Sociology, 8 (1957), pp. 106-120; William J. Goode, "A Theory of Role Strain," American Sociological Review, 25 (1960), pp. 483-495; and Gross, Mason, and McEachern, op. cit.

3. Our analysis considers only the case of conflicts involving two sets of expectations. It could be extended of course to conflicts involving more than two sets of expectations.

4. The actual course of resolution will not be considered in this report, but data bearing on the resolution of role conflict were obtained and may be analyzed at a later time.

5. There are other types of conflict, and one of the most important may be what Sarbin has called "self-role" conflict, where the person's expectations for his own behavior conflict with expectations held by others for him. See Theodore R. Sarbin, "Role Theory," in Gardner Lindzey (Editor), Handbook of Social Psychology, Vol. I (Cambridge: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1954), pp. 251-255.

6. U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Biennial Survey of Education in the United States 1954-1956 (Washington:

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Government Printing Office, 1959), Chapter 3, p. 37.

7. Although the discussion of "effects" implies a temporal sequence of event and subsequent effect, the data will present evidence of simultaneous association only. The empirical evidence admits, therefore, of alternative theoretical explanation.

8. A discussion of the significance of negative sanction for the occupants of the focal position is to be found in Talcott Parsons, The Social System (Glencoe: Free Press, 1951); and a critique of Parsons' formulation is presented by Gross, Mason, and McEachern, op. cit., pp. 64-67.

9. Jacob W. Getzels and Egon G. Guba, "The Structure of Roles and Role Conflict in the Teaching Situation," Journal of Educational Sociology, 29 (1955), pp. 30-39.

10. Gross, Mason, and McEachern, op. cit., pp. 274-279.

Chapter 5: Method of the Study

The opportunity for testing the hypotheses advanced here, and for exploring the effects of additional factors, arose as part of a more extensive research project, the National Principalship Study. In addition to examining the role conflicts of principals, this study is concerned with their leadership efforts and many other facets of their role performance.[1]

The role conflict inquiry was included as a part of the National Principalship Study to shed light on the nature and correlates of potential stress in this educational administration position.

In this chapter considerations governing the design of the role conflict study will be described. The population of principals and the method for selecting the sample will be indicated, and the data collection procedures will be reported. The final sections of the chapter deal with the problems of summarizing the responses of the principals to the Role Conflict instrument.

Some Preliminary Decisions

Several decisions had to be made concerning the design of the present study. Among these were whether to collect data on role conflict by interview or by questionnaire; whether to focus on experiences of role conflict or on the resolution of hypothetical conflicts; and whether to concentrate on a limited or more extensive set of hypotheses.

The questionnaire technique was chosen because it permitted a wide coverage of possible role conflict areas and reduced the problem of coding to a minimum. The interview, on the other hand, would yield much more information about any particular role conflict but would present difficult problems of coding and comparability. Most previous studies had depended on questionnaire information, but interviews had also been used with success.[2] An additional consideration was the complexity of the idea of role conflict. It was important that the respondent have a clear understanding of the idea of conflicting expectations, and pre-testing showed the need for carefully designed questions. Eventually, it was decided to include a questionnaire on role conflict and to devote a portion of the interview to exploring the reported conflicts in greater depth. The questionnaire was designed to cover as many different sources and areas of conflict as possible, whereas the interview inquired into the resolution of major role conflicts. This report is restricted to the principals' exposure and reaction to role conflict and therefore deals only with the responses to the questionnaire.

In designing the questionnaire, it was decided to deal with actually experienced conflict rather than hypothetical conflict situations. Again, there was precedent for either procedure. Studies such as those by Stouffer and Mishler had dealt with the resolution of hypothetical conflicts, while Getzels and Guba and Gross, _et al_., investigated experiences with actual conflict.[3] Since the concern in this study was with a clearly defined occupational role, it seemed feasible to focus on the experiences of the role occupant, in dealing with varying expectations held for him by others.

A third question focused on the scope of the study: whether to focus on a limited number of variables related to role conflict or to attempt a more extensive study. As indicated earlier, we decided on the first alternative.

Design of the Questionnaire

Three basic ideas governed the design of the Role Conflict questionnaire. One was that it should be as comprehensive as possible, covering a large number of areas of potential conflict. In this way, it would prepare the principal for the role conflict section of the interview (the interviews always followed the questionnaire completion). Second, it should ask about conflicting expectations held by particular categories of persons such as teachers, parents, and administrative superiors. Very few previous studies had specified the persons holding the expectations, and such specification would give clarity and distinctiveness to the conflict. Third, the responses to questions on conflict should reveal both whether the conflict had occurred in the respondent's experience and how severe a conflict it had been.

Each of these considerations influenced the design of the questionnaire which is reproduced in full in Appendix A. The general form of the question was: "Have you been exposed to a situation during the past year where (group A) and (group B) held different views about how you should act in. . . ?" There followed a list of possible areas of conflict, such as dealing with disciplinary problems, setting policy on homework, and setting uniform grading standards for the school. The names of the two parties to the conflict, group A and group B, were specifically mentioned as "parents" and "teachers" or "teachers" and "administrative superiors."

To each item, representing an area of potential conflict, the principal could answer either that he was or was not exposed to it. If he indicated exposure to the conflict, then he could also indicate the severity of the conflict in terms of the difficulty of the problem that it created for him. Five degrees of intensity were offered as response choices, ranging from "exposure, but not a problem" to "exposure, and a serious problem."

The items were arranged in sections, each section focusing on conflicting expectations between a pair of counter-positions. Choice of these pairs from all the possible individuals with whom the principal interacts presented a difficult problem. On the basis of pre-tests, as well as theoretical considerations (see Chapter Three), three such pairs were chosen for intensive examination: teacher and parent, teacher and administrator, and among teachers as occupants of counter-positions. In addition, shorter sections were included to isolate conflicts arising among three other pairs of counter-positions: teachers and students, parents of students and the principal's family, and higher administrators and the principal's family. The principals' responses to these three shorter sections are not analyzed in the present study which is restricted to the three major sections of the role conflict questionnaire.

For each section, items were devised dealing with potential role conflicts of principals in their interaction with members of their role network. For instance, in the section on teacher-parent conflict, items dealt with such school problems as discipline, homework, and ability grouping. For teacher-administrator conflicts, items dealt more with the principal's administrative duties such as the assignment of teachers to classes and to non-teaching duties, teacher participation in administrative decision making, and the superivision of instruction. The items were constructed after a comprehensive review of the literature on the principalship and as a result of our pre-test interviews with school principals.

It will be noticed that teachers as a group of role definers are involved in all three of the sources of conflict to be examined: teachers and parents, teachers and administrators, and conflicting expectations among teachers. This focus on the teachers was first suggested by the amount of the principal's daily interaction with them, and the principals' pre-test interviews indicated that teachers frequently constituted one of the sources of their role conflicts. One party to the potential conflict is constant in each case (the teachers) while the other party is varied (parents, administrators, other teachers).

The final form of the questionnaire, as noted above, included sections on six sources of conflicts. Only the first three, consisting of 40 items, are examined in the present study. The first 12 items deal with conflict between teachers and parents; the second 14 items deal with conflict between teachers and administrators; and the last 14 items treat conflict stemming from incompatible expectations of teachers.

Selection of the Sample and Collection of the Data

The National Principalship Study was designed to obtain as representative a sample as possible of all public school principals in United States cities with populations of 50,000 or over. A multi-stage sampling design was employed to select the cities and the principals within each city.

The 41 cities were selected in such a way as to represent all sizes of city, the four major geographic areas of the United States (East, South, Midwest, and Far West), and differing levels of city wealth as indicated by per-pupil expenditure on schools. A complete listing of the schools in each city was then obtained from the school system administration showing the level of each school and the administration's rating of the socio-economic status of each school district. A sample of principals in each of the school systems, ranging from 7 in the smallest cities to 35 in the largest ones, was selected to represent the levels of school and socio-economic areas within each city. Altogether the sample of 501 principals represents nearly 5 per cent of all school principals in American cities of 50,000 population or more. Some characteristics of the sample are shown in Table 5-1.

The research design specified the exclusion of certain types of "special" principals from the sample. Among these were teaching principals (those who did not give their full time to supervision of the school), principals with less than one year's experience in their present school, and principals of specialized schools such as vocational schools and those for handicapped children.

Table 5-1. Characteristics of the National Principalship Study Sample of Principals (N = 501)

Sex and Level		Elementary	Junior High	Senior High	Total
	Women	91	21	7	119
	Men	98	129	155	382
	Total	189	150	162	501

Age	
25 - 29	1
30 - 39	35
40 - 49	131
50 - 59	231
60 - 69	100
not given	3

Marital Status (current)	
Single	75
Married	405
Other	21

Race	
White	464
Non-white	37

Geographical Region	
East	135
South	131
Mid-West	138
Far West	97

Of the 508 principals originally listed for the sample, it was possible to obtain questionnaire data from 501 and to interview at length 498 of the 501. In addition to the principal's responses, mailed questionnaires were completed by a sample of the teachers in his school and data were also obtained from the principal's immediate administrative superior.

The typical procedure for data collection in a city began with a luncheon meeting attended by the principals, the NPS staff member, and the superintendent. At this time the purpose of the study was explained and the week's schedule outlined. The NPS staff emphasized the confidential nature of the data, the potential value of the study to the profession of school administration, and its support by professional organizations and the United States Office of Education. After the luncheon, the superintendent was excused, and the principals spent three to four hours completing questionnaires on important aspects of their roles. The questionnaire on role conflict was completed during this session.

During the ensuing week lengthy interviews were held with each of the principals individually in a location not connected with the school system. The principals were informed that the study was not affiliated with the local school administration in any way, although it enjoyed its approval and support. During the interview, the principal had an opportunity to comment on his questionnaire responses and also to describe his particular school situation at length. A portion of the interview, usually about half an hour of the total three to four hours, was devoted to exploring one or two role conflicts in detail. Although these data will not be reported on here, occasional reference to them will be made for purposes of illustration.

The impression given by the principals during the interviews was one of interest in and full cooperation with the study. There was a normal concern with self-justification but also a relaxed atmosphere which prompted honest self-assessment and comment about the school situation. Factors disposing principals to suppress or exaggerate responses, such as defensiveness or apprehension, seemed to be balanced by their desire to help their profession. In short, there appears to be no reason not to accept the questionnaire responses at face value.

After the interviews in a city were all completed, the study staff member met for a second luncheon with the superintendent who was accompanied by those of his assistants (usually three or four) to whom the principals reported directly. At this session the staff discussed the aims of the study with the higher administrators, and they then responded to a number of instruments, many of them similar to the ones the principals had answered. They also rated the principals on a number of aspects of their administrative behavior.

This phase of the field work was carried out during the fall of 1960. The study staff then re-assembled in Cambridge and began work on the processing of the data and on the construction of a 21-page questionnaire to be sent to a sample of teachers in each of the 501 schools. This last questionnaire was sent out in March 1961 to 4,700 teachers and was returned by over 70 per cent of them. The rate of response is unusually high for a national sample reached only by mail and is another indication of the degree of support given by educators to the National Principalship Study.

Processing the Data

The responses to the Role Conflict instrument were pre-coded (see Appendix A). They were first edited for accuracy and completion, to rule out such errors as double responses, and to assess the effect of written comments. (There were relatively few of the latter, and they were usually intended to explain a particular situation.) The responses were then punched into standard IBM cards and readied for analysis. In this form, patterns of response to individual items could be studied and related to other variables.

One of the major objects of the National Principalship Study was to develop reliable measures to describe various aspects of the principal's role. Wherever possible cumulative scales were developed based on as many items as possible. Such scales are more reliable than single items and give some assurance that a single dimension underlies the group of items.

Scale scores were developed to measure the degree of exposure to and severity of role conflict. The considerations governing the construction of the Role Conflict Scales are presented in Chapter Seven, and a full description of each scale is to be found in Appendix B which also includes technical details of measurement.

Similarly, cumulative scales were constructed to measure three types of possible "effects" of role conflict described in Chapter Eight.

Scales for satisfaction with work, worry about work, and level of career aspiration are presented in full in Appendix B.

The construction of the scale scores and much of the preliminary analysis was carried out by means of the IBM 101. Where more complex computations were required, as in correlation or the analysis of variance, the IBM 709 and 7090 were employed using programs written by the staff of the National Principalship Study.

The "Subjectivity" of Reports of Role Conflict

A problem in dealing with the principals' reports of role conflict was whether they could be treated as "real" occurrences of conflicting expectations. It is our assumption that the reports of role conflict can be treated as if they were real, as if the occurrences of conflicting expectation in fact took place.

It is relevant to inquire whether this assumption can be supported by other data obtained in the study. Two kinds of evidence are available: information supplied by other persons in the school and additional information supplied by the principal in a different context.

Responses of teachers to an instrument dealing with role expectations for principals were examined in an attempt to explore this matter. Disagreements among teachers on these expectations should correspond to the principal's report of exposure to teacher-teacher conflict.

Four items on the teacher questionnaire were selected as similar in content to items on the Role Conflict questionnaire completed by the principals. In some schools the teachers disagreed on the expectations that they held for the principal, whereas in other schools they did not.

For each item the principals were divided into two groups: those whose teachers disagreed and those whose teachers did not. The two groups of principals were then compared on the frequency with which they reported the occurrence of teacher-teacher conflict. No substantial difference was found between the two groups indicating that the teachers' statements of their expectations did not confirm the principal's report of teacher-teacher conflict.

The lack of correspondence between the teachers' responses and the principal's report, however, could be explained by the fact that the teachers responding to the questionnaire constitute only a sample of the teachers in each school. The principal's report of role conflict covers the expectations held by all the teachers. Also, the items on the teacher questionnaire were more specific than those on the principal's questionnaire so the lack of correspondence may be due to differences in the items.

Other evidence, however, does support our assumption about the "reality" of role conflicts to which the principals indicated they were exposed. In the interviews, the principals were asked to report cases of role conflict in some detail. Approximately 490 cases of role conflict were obtained from 320 principals. A preliminary tabulation of these cases shows certain correspondences to the findings obtained from the Role Conflict instrument.

With respect to the sources of role conflict, the following percentages of principals indicated that the following pairs of incumbents of counter-positions held conflicting expectations for their performance:

Teachers and parents	47%
Teachers and administrators	15%
Disagreements within the teacher group	19%
Other possible sources (none over 5%)	19%

Two points about this tabulation are of special relevance in assessing the principals' responses to the Role Conflict instrument. In the first place, the three sources of role conflict that we emphasized in the design of the questionnaire are the sources the principals themselves mention most frequently in describing particular cases of conflict. Each of these sources of conflicting expectations was included in the Role Conflict instrument. Second, the frequency of exposure to these three sources of conflict reported by the principals during their interviews is the same as the frequency found from the analysis of their responses to the Role Conflict instrument. As Chapter Six will show, teacher-parent conflicts were reported most frequently across all items, disagreements within the teacher group were the second most frequent source of conflict, and teacher-administrator conflicts were least frequent. In short, the principals' accounts of the detailed cases of role conflict tend to support a "reality orientation" in their questionnaire responses.

At another point in the interview the principals were asked about pressures coming from various groups they dealt with: administrators, businessmen in the community, parent groups, individual parents, the teachers in the school, the students, and others. These pressures may be construed as expectations with a particular urgency and specific content, and in this sense they are comparable to the role conflict items. The 501 principals in the sample mentioned over 4,900 pressures in all covering a wide variety of areas. The pressures were classified by source, and the results are again similar to the sources of conflicting expectations. The pressures came from the following groups: administrative superiors, 15 per cent; individual parents, 41 per cent; teachers, 17 per cent; parent groups, 8 per cent; principal's own administrative staff, 6 per cent; businessmen and business groups, 3 per cent; other sources, 10 per cent. It is noteworthy that the three most salient groups, in terms of pressures exerted on the principal, are those used in the Role Conflict questionnaire. Also, the dominance of parents as a source of pressures suggests one reason why exposure to teacher-parent conflict was more frequent than exposure to the two other sources of conflict.

This chapter has been concerned entirely with the method of the study: sample, questionnaire, procedures of data collection, and some special methodological problems. The following three chapters report the findings of the study. Chapter Six describes the role conflicts of principals and reports the areas of interaction which lead to relatively high and low exposure to role conflict. In Chapter Seven, possible determinants of role conflict are explored, while Chapter Eight deals with some effects of the role conflict.

Notes and References for Chapter 5

1. See Neal Gross and Robert E. Herriott, The Professional Leadership of Elementary School Principals, Final Report No. 1, Cooperative Research Project No. 853, April 1964; and Neal Gross and Anne E. Trask, Men and Women as Elementary School Principals, Final Report No. 2, Cooperative Research Project No. 853, June 1964.

2. Studies of role conflict using the questionnaire method are: Samuel A. Stouffer, "An Analysis of Conflicting Social Norms," American Sociological Review, 14 (1949), pp. 707-717; Jacob W. Getzels and Egon G. Guba, "Role, Role Conflict and Role Effectiveness," American Sociological Review, 19 (1954), pp. 164-175; Jacob W. Getzels and Egon G. Guba, "The Structure of Roles and Role Conflict in the Teaching Situation," Journal of Educational Sociology, 29 (1955), pp. 30-39; and Melvin W. Seeman, Social Status and Leadership (Columbus: Ohio State University Bureau of Educational Research, 1960). An interview study is that by Waldo W. Burchard, "Role Conflicts of Military Chaplains," American Sociological Review, 19 (1954), pp. 528-535. A combination of questionnaire and interview was employed by Neal Gross, Ward S. Mason, and Alexander W. McEachern, Explorations in Role Analysis: Studies of the School Superintendency Role (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1958).

3. Samuel A. Stouffer and Jackson Toby, "Role Conflict and Personality," American Journal of Sociology, 56 (1951), pp. 395-401; Elliot G. Mishler, "Personality Characteristics and the Resolution of Role Conflict," Public Opinion Quarterly, 17 (1953), pp. 134-143; Getzels and Guba, "Role, Role Conflict and Role Effectiveness," op. cit.; and Gross, Mason, and McEachern, op. cit.

Chapter 6: Exposure and Reaction to Role Conflict

This chapter describes the principals' responses to the questionnaire on role conflict. The descriptive material serves as a background for the analysis of correlates of role conflict to be presented in later chapters.

Two indices will be used to describe the principals' responses: an index of exposure to role conflict and an index of reaction to the role conflict situation. After explaining these measures, we shall present the findings bearing on the occurrence of role conflict. The findings will be presented separately for each of three sets of counter-positions and a final section will compare the indices of role conflict from the three sets of counter-positions.

In discussing the principals' exposure and reaction to role conflict, reference will be made to a number of characteristics of the principal's position in the school organization. These characteristics, noted in Chapter Three, constitute potential sources of strain in the principal's role: the principal's location in the middle of the hierarchy, where he must deal with the expectations of persons occupying a number of counter-positions; the fact that some of the counter-positions belong to different social systems, so that interaction between occupants of them must cross system boundaries; the structural isolation of the principalship; the tension between universalistic and particularistic values and its implications for role conflict; and the visibility of the principal's action to the teachers, parents, and higher administrators. These sources of strain will be used to explain variations in the principals' exposure and reaction to role conflict.

The Indices of Exposure and Reaction to Role Conflict

The questionnaire was divided into three sections, each of which dealt with conflicting expectations from a particular set of counter-positions. The three sets of counter-positions, chosen after investigation and trial interviews, were: 1) teachers and parents; 2) teachers and administrators; and 3) differences within the teacher group.

For descriptive purposes, it is useful to have a set of indices that represent the proportion of principals who were exposed to role conflict in a particular area and who experienced difficulty as a result of that conflict. Prior to presenting the indices, it is necessary to describe the precise procedure used to isolate exposure and reaction to role conflict. To illustrate the procedure, the section of the questionnaire that dealt with conflicting expectations held by teachers and parents is presented here. For 12 potential areas of role conflict, the principals were asked whether they had been exposed to conflicting expectations in each of the areas. The question was:

> "Have you been exposed to a situation during the past year where teachers and the parents of students held different views about how you should act in. . .
>
> 1. promoting certain students?"
> 2. . . . .
> 3. . . . .
>
> etc.

The response choices were:

A = I was exposed to this situation and it was a serious problem for me.

B = I was exposed to this situation and it was a moderate problem for me.

C = I was exposed to this situation and it was a slight problem for me.

D = I was exposed to this situation and it was a very slight problem for me.

E = I was exposed to this situation but it was not a problem for me.

F = I was not exposed to this situation.

N = This situation could not occur in my type of school.

Exposure to role conflict is defined as any response A through E. For a given item, the index of exposure to role conflict is the ratio of the number of principals giving responses A through E to the number of principals giving responses A through F. This ratio is expressed in percentage form. For example, the index of exposure for the item on the promotion of students is 80.8 per cent. Of the 489 principals who viewed the area of promotion as applicable to their school situation (12 did not), 395 gave responses A-E, indicating exposure to the conflict (395/489 = 80.8 per cent).

The index of reaction to role conflict, for any area, is defined as the ratio of the number of persons reporting a problem connected with the role conflict (responses A through D) to the number of persons reporting exposure to the conflict in that area (responses A through E). As before, this ratio is expressed in percentage form. The persons not exposed to the conflict (responses F and N) are excluded from the computation of the index of reaction, since they did not experience role conflict in that area.

Parents and Teachers as a Source of Role Conflict

Table 6-1 shows the distribution of the principals' responses and the indices of exposure and reaction to 12 role conflict areas involving the expectations held for the principals by parents and teachers. The items in the table are lettered A to L, and are ordered by the size of the index of exposure to role conflict. The area with the greatest frequency of exposure, "promoting certain students," appears first on the list, with other areas following in decreasing frequency of exposure.

The index of exposure for the areas in Table 6-1 ranges from 44 per cent to 81 per cent. Over half of the principals were exposed to role conflict in 11 of the 12 areas. For three items, more than three-quarters of the principals reported exposure to conflicting expectations: "promoting certain students" (item A); "giving special attention to slow learners" (item C); and "permitting a student to enroll in a course" (item B).[1] Each of these areas is concerned with the placement and academic treatment of students. Promotion, for instance, is a crucial decision for the child reflecting his over-all success in the school. It involves the particularistic demands of the parents for success for their child against the universalistic demands of the teachers, who must maintain professional standards and expect all children to meet them.

Table 6-1. Conflicting Expectations Held by Parents and Teachers: Exposure and Reaction to Role Conflict

Source of Expectations	Responses of Principals				Indices of Conflict*	
Teachers and Parents	A,B,C,D = Exposed and a Problem	E = Exposed but no Problem	F = Not Exposed	N = Not Applicable, or No Response	Exposure	Reaction
A. Promoting certain students.	317	78	94	12	80.8%	80.2%
B. Permitting a student to enroll in a course.	210	72	89	130	76.0	75.4
C. Giving special attention to slow learners.	249	122	120	10	76.5	67.1
D. Handling major disciplinary problems.	303	64	123	11	74.9	82.6
E. Grouping students by ability.	252	99	121	29	74.4	71.8
F. Giving special attention to gifted students.	229	104	146	22	69.5	68.8
G. Setting a school policy in assigning homework.	233	97	152	19	68.4	70.6

Table 6-1 (Cont.)

Source of Expectations	Responses of Principals				Indices of Conflict*	
Teachers and Parents	A,B,C,D = Exposed and a Problem	E = Exposed but no Problem	F = Not Exposed	N = Not Applicable, or No Response	Exposure	Reaction
H. Setting uniform grading standards for the school.	250	50	160	41	65.2%	83.3%
I. Encouraging parents to take part in school activities.	224	96	167	14	63.7	70.0
J. Supervising instruction.	200	81	196	24	59.9	71.1
K. Deciding on the amount of time you personally devote to working with students.	171	82	226	22	52.8	67.6
L. Setting up programs for the "culturally deprived" child.	122	57	238	84	43.9	68.1

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*These indices are explained in the text.

The item with lowest frequency of exposure (44 per cent) is "setting up special programs for the culturally deprived child." Conflict over this area is likely to arise only in communities with "culturally deprived" groups. The fact that 44 per cent of the principals were exposed to role conflict over this issue is an indication of the extent of the problem in the urban schools.

We have seen that a majority of the principals were confronted with role conflict in 11 of the 12 areas listed. Now we turn to an examination of the indices of reaction, the extent to which the conflicts created problems for the principals.

The index of reaction to role conflict ranges from 68 per cent to 83 per cent for the areas of parent-teacher conflict. For three of the areas, (items A, D, and H) over 80 per cent of the principals who were exposed to role conflict indicated that it produced a problem for them. Conflicts over the area of grading standards elicited the most intense reaction. This area involves the issue, noted in Chapter Three, of the evaluation of product. When the product is essentially intangible the evaluation of it becomes a thorny problem, whether the product is, as in this case, the performance of a student or, on a larger scale, the performance of a teacher or of an entire school.

In addition to the area of grading standards, the areas of discipline (item D) and promotion (item A) received indices of reaction of more than 80 per cent. All of these areas are likely to involve the universalistic-particularistic dilemma, opposing the needs of the individual to the demands for standards for the group.

A number of items display indices of reaction between 67 and 72 per cent. Among these are two items relating to special groups of students: "giving special attention to gifted students" (item F) and "giving special attention to slow learners" (item C). Reaction to conflicts in these two areas is almost equally intense, as shown by indices of 67 and 69 per cent. The indices of exposure for the two areas show an unexpected difference, for 77 per cent of the principals report exposure to role conflict over the treatment of slow learners, but only 70 per cent do so over the treatment of gifted students. At the time of collecting the data, in the fall of 1960, there was much concern on the part of educators and the public about the question of providing sufficient challenge for gifted students. The principals in this sample, however, report more role conflict for the area of attention to the slow learners. Perhaps this pattern of exposure to role conflict is due to the urban nature of the sample, for urban schools draw large numbers of students from ethnically and economically underprivileged groups.

Teachers and Administrators as a Source of Role Conflict

The second section of the questionnaire inquired into conflicts arising from the expectations held by teachers and the principal's administrative superiors, such as the superintendent and his staff. Table 6-2 shows the distribution of responses and the indices of exposure and reaction to role conflicts from this set of counter-positions. Fourteen areas of possible conflict are represented, arranged in order of decreasing indices of exposure. The areas are lettered and the eight areas which

Table 6-2. Conflicting Expectations Held by Teachers and Administrators: Exposure and Reaction to Role Conflict

Source of Expectations	Responses of Principals				Indices of Conflict*	
Teachers and the principal's administrative superiors	A,B,C,D = Exposed and a Problem	E = Exposed but no Problem	F = Not Exposed	N = Not Applicable, or No Response	Exposure	Reaction
M. Introducing changes into the instructional program.	198	93	196	14	59.8%	68.0%
N. Assigning teachers to non-teaching duties.	135	105	237	24	50.3	56.3
C. Giving special attention to slow learners.	139	94	251	17	48.1	59.7
O. Requiring teachers to perform clerical work.	135	91	244	31	48.1	59.3
J. Supervising instruction.	148	81	255	17	47.3	64.5
F. Giving special attention to gifted students.	120	87	271	23	43.3	58.0
D. Handling major disciplinary problems.	131	67	279	24	42.5	66.1

Table 6-2 (Cont.)

Source of Expectations	Responses of Principals				Indices of Conflict*	
Teachers and the principal's administrative superiors	A,B,C,D = Exposed and a Problem	E = Exposed but no Problem	F = Not Exposed	N = Not Applicable, or No Response	Exposure	Reaction
P. Assigning teachers to classes they prefer.	122	65	274	40	40.6%	65.2%
A. Promoting certain students.	130	65	286	20	40.5	66.6
E. Grouping students by ability.	113	82	285	21	40.6	57.9
G. Setting a school policy in assigning homework.	113	76	291	21	39.4	59.8
Q. Permitting teacher participation in administrative decision-making.	96	93	296	16	39.0	50.8
R. Emphasizing extra-curricular activities.	97	74	289	41	37.2	56.7
L. Setting up programs for the "culturally deprived" child.	74	58	305	64	30.2	56.1

*These indices are explained in the text.

are identical to those in Table 6-1 receive the same letter as they did in that table. The system of lettering facilitates the comparison of identical items in Tables 6-1, 6-2, and 6-3.

The index of exposure to role conflict ranges from 30 to 60 per cent for the fourteen areas represented in Table 6-2. "Introducing change into the instructional program" (item M) stands out as the area creating most frequent exposure to conflict, since 60 per cent of the principals report such exposure. It also receives the highest index of reaction, 68 per cent, of any of the areas of teacher-administrator conflict. The interviews with the principals indicated the nature of the differing expectations held by teachers and administrators over the introduction of change. Primarily it is the administrators that request the change and the teachers that object to it. Less frequent is the role conflict where the teachers request the change and the administrative superiors oppose it.

Almost 50 per cent of the principals report exposure to conflict in two areas involving the division of labor within the school. The items are "assigning teachers to non-teaching duties" (N) and "requiring teachers to perform clerical work" (O). These conflicts involve the opposition of the needs of the organization to the technical-professional demands of the principal's subordinates.

The least frequent exposure to conflict (30 per cent) is reported for the area of "setting up programs for the culturally deprived child." It will be recalled that this area also created least frequent exposure to role conflict for expectations held by teachers and parents. Conflicts over this type of program emerged only in communities where the less privileged groups reside.

Among several items with indices of exposure of less than 40 per cent is item Q, "permitting teacher participation in administrative decision-making." This area is a recent trend in administrative practice in the school, and conflict probably arises from the attempt to introduce this practice.

The index of reaction to teacher-administrator conflicts range from 51 per cent to 68 per cent. Of the principals exposed to conflict over the issue of teacher participation in administrative decision-making, only 51 per cent said that the conflict resulted in a problem for them. The introduction of instructional change, on the other hand, elicited more intense reaction as shown by an index of 68 per cent. Although both these areas may involve changes introduced by the principal, it is noteworthy that the conflicts over instructional change created greater difficulty for the principals.

A comparison of the indices for the items on special attention for gifted students and for slow learners shows that principals are more frequently exposed to teacher-administrator conflict on the latter issue. Forty-three per cent report role conflicts over the gifted student question, while 48 per cent report conflicts arising over the slow learner problem. While the difference is not great, it is similar to that found for these two items on the section on teacher-parent conflicts.

A comparison of Tables 6-1 and 6-2 reveals that the indices for exposure and reaction to conflict tend to be lower for conflicts arising from teacher and administrator expectations than they are for expectations held by teachers and parents. A comparison of the items common to all sections of the questionnaire will be presented in the last section of this chapter.

Conflicting Expectations within the Teacher Group

The third section of the questionnaire inquired into role conflicts arising from incompatible expectations held by teachers. This source of conflict involves differing expectations held by occupants of the same counter-position, the teachers. In this respect, it differs from the other two sources, for these involved expectations held by persons in two different counter-positions (teachers and parents, or teachers and administrators). This third source of role conflict may be called teacher-teacher conflict, since it arises from expectations held by one teacher (or group of teachers) that are incompatible with expectations held by another teacher (or group of teachers).

The expectations held by teachers can be presumed to be especially salient to the principal, since he must deal with them so extensively. We have noted that the structural arrangements of the school system tend to isolate the principal from his administrative superiors. In the same way, it increases his dependence on the teachers as a group, and makes their expectations for his behavior of special importance to him. For this reason the possibility of teacher-teacher conflict was investigated in a section of the questionnaire, and the principals' responses to the items in this section are summarized in Table 6-3.

Table 6-3. Conflicting Expectations Held Within the Teacher Group: Exposure and Reaction to Role Conflict

Source of Expectations	Responses of Principals				Indices of Conflict*	
Teachers disagreeing with other teachers	A,B,C,D = Exposed and a Problem	E = Exposed but no Problem	F = Not Exposed	N = Not Applicable, or No Response	Exposure	Reaction
H. Setting uniform grading standards for the school.	239	71	173	18	64.2%	77.1%
M. Introducing changes into the instructional program.	202	113	176	10	64.2	64.1
E. Grouping students by ability.	203	108	174	16	64.1	65.2
N. Assigning teachers to non-teaching duties.	188	115	181	17	62.6	62.1
D. Handling major disciplinary problems.	217	85	188	11	61.6	71.8
C. Giving special attention to slow learners.	175	112	203	11	58.6	62.0
P. Assigning teachers to classes they prefer.	178	95	197	31	58.1	65.2

Table 6-3 (Cont.)

Source of Expectations	Responses of Principals				Indices of Conflict*	
Teachers disagreeing with other teachers	A,B,C,D = Exposed and a Problem	E = Exposed but no Problem	F = Not Exposed	N = Not Applicable, or No Response	Exposure	Reaction
Q. Encouraging teacher participation in administrative decision-making.	160	112	219	10	55.4%	58.8%
S. Devoting time to the improvement of the curriculum.	171	98	219	13	55.1	63.6
F. Giving special attention to gifted students.	165	99	220	17	54.5	62.5
O. Requiring teachers to perform clerical work.	156	105	215	25	54.8	59.8
G. Setting a school policy in assigning homework.	155	105	222	19	53.9	59.6
T. Devoting time to working with individual teachers.	136	91	260	14	46.6	59.9
J. Supervising instruction.	131	79	278	13	43.0	62.4

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*These indices are explained in the text.

The frequency of exposure to teacher-teacher conflict ranges from 43 per cent, for the item on "supervising instruction," to 64 per cent, for three items: "setting uniform grading standards for the school," "introducing changes into the instructional program," and "grouping students by ability." It is perhaps surprising that "supervising instruction" should be the area generating the least teacher-teacher conflict. The supervision of instruction is usually given by the principals as their most important duty, and it is central to the principal-teacher relationship. Evidently principals are confronted with more congruence of expectations among their teachers on supervision than on other sectors of their role. Some principals may restrict their supervision of instruction to new and probationary teachers, which could account for the absence of role conflict in this area.

The three items for which exposure to conflict is most frequent center on decisions that affect the teaching faculty as a whole: grading standards, the introduction of change, and the grouping of students by ability. When a principal's decision affects all the teachers, there may be more opportunity for incompatible expectations to be expressed and made explicit, so that the principal tends to be more frequently exposed to role conflict in this type of situation.

The index of reaction to teacher-teacher conflict ranges from 59 per cent to 77 per cent. The lowest reaction is to conflicts over "permitting teacher participation in administrative decision-making," indicating that this is not an area provoking intense feelings and consequent problems for the principal. The same item was also the lowest, in terms of the reaction index, for conflicts between administrators and teachers.

The highest reaction index of 77 per cent is for conflicts over "setting uniform grading standards for the school." This issue again reflects the problem of the evaluation of product, and the imposing of uniform standards across a heterogeneous group of students. This item also created most frequent exposure to teacher-teacher conflict.

As for the other two sets of counter-positions, the question of special attention to slow learners exposes the principal to more frequent problems than the same question for gifted children. Differences in reaction to conflict over these two items are negligible.

A Comparison of Conflicts: Three Sets of Counter-Positions

It is of interest to compare the principals' reports of exposure and reaction to role conflicts arising from the three sets of counter-positions (teachers and parents, teachers and administrative superiors, and disagreements within the teacher group). Of the 12 to 14 items in each of the three sections of the questionnaire, six were repeated in all sections (items C, D, E, F, G, and J). In Table 6-4 the indices of exposure and reaction are presented for the six items for the three sets of counter-positions.

Four major observations emerge from an examination of Table 6-4. First, the highest index of exposure for each of the six items derives from from the conflicting expectations held for the principal by parents and teachers. On every item, the principals reported more frequent exposure to parent-teacher conflict than to conflict from either of the other sets of counter-positions.

Second, the index of reaction shows a similar pattern: for every

Table 6-4. Indices of Role Conflict, for Three Sets of Counter-Positions (for items common to Tables 6-1, 6-2, and 6-3)

Sources of Conflicting Expectations	Index of Exposure to Role Conflict			Index of Reaction to Role Conflict		
	Teachers and Parents	Teachers and Administrators	Disagreements among Teachers	Teachers and Parents	Teachers and Administrators	Disagreements among Teachers
D. Handling major disciplinary problems.	74.9	42.5	61.6	82.6	66.1	71.8
E. Grouping students by ability.	74.4	40.6	64.1	71.8	57.9	65.2
F. Giving special attention to gifted students.	69.5	42.5	54.5	68.8	58.0	62.5
C. Giving special attention to slow learners.	76.5	48.1	58.6	67.1	59.3	62.0
G. Setting a school policy in assigning homework.	68.4	39.4	53.9	70.6	59.8	59.6
J. Supervising instruction.	59.9	47.3	43.0	71.1	64.6	62.4

item, the highest index is reported for conflicts deriving from expectations held by parents and teachers. The principals find that these conflicts more frequently create problems for them than do conflicts arising from the other sets of counter-positions.

Thirdly, a comparison of the indices of exposure to teacher-administrator and teacher-teacher conflict reveals that the latter is higher on five of the six items. The differences range from 11 to 23 per cent, indicating that the principals are more frequently exposed to conflicts arising from differing expectations held by the teachers. The exception is the area of supervising instruction, where exposure to teacher-administrator conflict is more frequent than exposure to teacher-teacher conflict.

A fourth observation is that the index for reaction to teacher-teacher conflict is slightly greater than that for teacher-administrator conflict, on five of the six items. For conflicts involving these five areas, principals are more likely to experience problems as a result of exposure to teacher-teacher conflict than as a result of teacher-administrator conflict. The only exception is the area of supervising instruction, item J.

For the indices of exposure and reaction to conflict, the ordering of the three sets of counter-positions is constant. Exposure to conflicting expectations from teachers and parents is most frequent, followed in frequency by teacher-teacher conflict, with teacher-administrator conflict the least frequent of the three. Reaction to teacher-parent conflict is the most intense, followed by teacher-teacher conflict and teacher-administrator conflict in that order.

This ordering of role conflicts in the principal's position admits of several explanations. One possibility is the effect of social system boundaries. The teachers are members of the school organizations whereas the parents as clients are outside the organization. Role conflict occurring across this boundary seems to be both frequent and difficult to resolve for the principal.

Teacher-administrator conflict also occurs across a social system boundary. The teachers are members of the school, but the principal's administrative superiors are not. This type of cross-boundary conflict occurs less frequently and creates fewer problems than does teacher-parent conflict. Teachers and administrators, while members of different social systems at one level, both belong to the school system of the city and, frequently, to the professional education organizations. As members of the same system, they are more likely to hold congruent expectations for the principal than are teachers and parents, who have no such common membership.

While explanation in terms of cross-boundary conflicts offers some assistance in understanding the indices for teacher-parent and teacher-administrator conflict, it does not apply to teacher-teacher conflict. No formal system boundaries divide the teachers within the school, and yet both exposure and reaction to teacher-teacher conflict are substantial. Perhaps a different interpretation can be offered, in terms of the interaction of the principal with his teachers. The principal interacts frequently and intensely with his subordinates, the teachers, whereas he interacts less often with the parents and with his administrative superiors. The interaction with the teachers makes the principal more aware of the expectations held for him and more sensitive to any incompatibility in these expectations. The heightened awareness creates a greater likelihood of exposure to teacher-teacher conflict. Although the conflicts do not involve persons in different social systems, they are frequent and difficult to resolve because of the intense interaction between the principal and his teachers.

This description of conflicts in the principal's role has indicated the extent and intensity of the incompatible expectations held by occupants of three sets of counter-positions. In general, the principals are frequently exposed to conflict: a majority reported exposure to conflict for 11 of the 12 areas of parent-teacher conflict, 2 of the 14 areas of teacher-administrator conflict, and 12 of the 14 areas of teacher-teacher conflict. Of those exposed to conflict, over half reported that the conflict created a problem for them in every area for every set of counter-positions.

This description confirms the discussion presented in Chapter Three of the points of strain in the principal's role. For the principals in this sample, role conflicts are both a frequent occurrence and a problem to resolve. The question of the possible determinants of role conflict, in the characteristics of the principals and their social situations, will be discussed in the following chapter.

Notes and References for Chapter Six

1. The number of principals selecting the N response to item B is 130, and indicates that the area of course enrollment does not apply to the school situation of one-quarter of the principals. These are elementary schools, for the most part, where the curriculum is not divided into courses.

Chapter 7: Determinants of Role Conflict

Many factors may influence a principal's exposure and reaction to role conflict. Two of these are the sex-role of the principal and the level of school which he (or she) administers. Chapter Four considered the probable influence of each of these factors on the principal's experience with role conflict and advanced specific predictions as to the direction of the influence. In this chapter the accuracy of these predictions will be tested. The findings will then be further explored, to ascertain the effects of two other variables, the length of experience in the principalship and the size of the principal's school.

Sex-role and Role Conflict

From a theoretical point of view, the sex-role of a person may be viewed as a latent role influencing the definition of all other roles that the person may enact. The sex of a person may limit the choice of other roles open to him and influence the expectations he will have to meet. In an occupational role the difference between sexes may be seen in differences in career plans, in career patterns, and in the emphasis placed on duties constituting the role.

Based on these differences, hypothesis 1 stated that:

Hypothesis 1: Men principals will be exposed to role conflict more frequently than women principals.

The reasoning leading to the prediction was based on two factors: differences in career patterns and the composition of the elementary school teaching staff. Men principals, it was argued, would experience conflict more often because they had less experience in the principalship and because they often moved on to other administrative positions. The teaching staff of elementary schools is predominantly female and this fact was also expected to lead to greater conflict for men principals than for women principals.

The basic data for the test of this hypothesis are presented in Table 7-1. It shows the index of exposure to role conflict for men and for women principals for each of 40 areas of potential conflict. The difference between the index for men and the index for women is also shown. In addition, Table 7-1 presents data on sex differences in reaction to role conflict. Although no specific prediction was made for differences between men and women principals in reaction to role conflict, these differences will also be discussed below. The indices for exposure and reaction to role conflict were explained in Chapter Six.

An examination of the differences in exposure to role conflict for men and women principals, as shown in Table 7-1, reveals strong support for the hypothesis predicting more frequent exposure to conflict for the men principals. Exposure to teacher-parent conflict is more frequent for men than for women principals in 11 of the 12 areas. Exposure to teacher-administrator conflict is more frequent for men in 11 of the 14 areas. Exposure to teacher-teacher conflict is more frequent for men in all 14 areas. It may be concluded that men principals experience more frequent exposure to role conflict arising from expectations held by persons in any of the three sets of counter-positions.

The size of the difference between the index of exposure to conflict for men principals and that for women principals is also of interest. For example, the largest difference (26 per cent) is reported for teacher-teacher conflict in the area of "permitting teacher participation in

Table 7-1. Exposure and Reaction to Role Conflict (Items), by Sex of Principal (Elementary Schools Only)

Source of Expectations	Index of Exposure to Role Conflict				Difference in Exposure: Men's Index minus Women's	Index of Reaction to Role Conflict				Difference in Exposure: Men's Index minus Women's
	Women		Men			Women		Men		
Teachers and Parents	Index	(N)	Index	(N)		Index	(N)	Index	(N)	
A. Promoting certain students.	77	(70)	83	(80)	+6	83	(58)	79	(63)	-4
B. Permitting a student to enroll in a course.	39	(14)	47	(16)	+8	57	(8)	56	(9)	-1
C. Giving special attention to slow learners.	64	(57)	77	(73)	+13	65	(37)	80	(58)	+15
D. Handling major disciplinary problems.	57	(51)	71	(67)	+14	82	(42)	85	(57)	+3
E. Grouping students by ability.	63	(52)	74	(64)	+12	67	(35)	73	(47)	+6
F. Giving special attention to gifted students.	47	(41)	67	(61)	+20	49	(20)	77	(47)	+28
G. Setting a school policy in assigning homework.	58	(49)	74	(70)	+16	63	(31)	64	(45)	+1
H. Setting uniform grading standards for the school.	47	(34)	57	(51)	+10	74	(25)	77	(39)	+3

Table 7-1 (Cont.)

Source of Expectations	Index of Exposure to Role Conflict				Difference in Exposure: Men's Index minus Women's	Index of Reaction to Role Conflict				Difference in Exposure: Men's Index minus Women's
	Women		Men			Women		Men		
Teachers and Parents	Index	(N)	Index	(N)		Index	(N)	Index	(N)	
I. Encouraging parents to take part in school activities.	61	(54)	64	(60)	+3	63	(34)	70	(42)	+7
J. Supervising instruction.	41	(35)	64	(59)	+23	57	(20)	63	(37)	+6
K. Deciding on the amount of time you personally devote to working with students.	44	(38)	52	(49)	+8	58	(22)	69	(34)	+11
L. Setting up programs for the "culturally deprived" child.	36	(22)	36	(28)	0	64	(14)	71	(20)	+7
Source of Expectations										
Teachers disagreeing with other teachers										
H. Setting uniform grading standards for the school.	42	(35)	61	(58)	+19	66	(23)	72	(42)	+6

Table 7-1 (Cont.)

Source of Expectations	Index of Exposure to Role Conflict				Difference in Exposure: Men's Index minus Women's	Index of Reaction to Role Conflict				Difference in Exposure: Men's Index minus Women's
Teachers disagreeing with other teachers	Women		Men			Women		Men		
	Index	(N)	Index	(N)		Index	(N)	Index	(N)	
M. Introducing changes into the instructional program.	48	(44)	65	(62)	+17	55	(24)	60	(37)	+5
E. Grouping students by ability.	54	(46)	64	(59)	+10	59	(27)	62	(36)	+3
N. Assigning teachers to non-teaching duties.	46	(40)	70	(64)	+24	55	(22)	61	(39)	+6
D. Handling major disciplinary problems.	46	(40)	66	(63)	+20	63	(25)	75	(47)	+12
C. Giving special attention to slow learners.	48	(43)	57	(55)	+9	58	(25)	62	(34)	+4
P. Assigning teachers to classes they prefer.	41	(33)	47	(37)	+6	52	(17)	62	(23)	+10
S. Devoting time to the improvement of the curriculum.	42	(37)	57	(54)	+15	49	(18)	61	(33)	+12
F. Giving special attention to gifted students.	40	(34)	47	(45)	+7	53	(18)	62	(28)	+9

Table 7-1 (Cont.)

Source of Expectations	Index of Exposure to Role Conflict				Difference in Exposure: Men's Index minus Women's	Index of Reaction to Role Conflict				Difference in Exposure: Men's Index minus Women's
	Women		Men			Women		Men		
Teachers disagreeing with other teachers	Index	(N)	Index	(N)		Index	(N)	Index	(N)	
Q. Encouraging teacher participation in administrative decision-making.	36	(32)	62	(59)	+26	56	(18)	53	(31)	-3
O. Requiring teachers to perform clerical work.	42	(36)	52	(49)	+10	33	(12)	45	(22)	+12
G. Setting a school policy in assigning homework.	37	(31)	55	(53)	+18	50	(16)	53	(28)	+3
T. Devoting time to working with individual teachers.	35	(31)	45	(43)	+10	42	(13)	63	(27)	+21
J. Supervising instruction.	23	(20)	44	(43)	+21	60	(12)	61	(26)	+1

Table 7-1 (Cont.)

Source of Expectations	Index of Exposure to Role Conflict				Difference in Exposure: Men's Index minus Women's	Index of Reaction to Role Conflict				Difference in Exposure: Men's Index minus Women's
Teachers and the principal's administrative superiors	Women		Men			Women		Men		
	Index	(N)	Index	(N)		Index	(N)	Index	(N)	
M. Introducing changes into the instructional program.	46	(41)	62	(58)	+16	58	(24)	72	(42)	+14
N. Assigning teachers to non-teaching duties.	40	(34)	48	(44)	+8	53	(18)	57	(25)	+4
C. Giving special attention to slow learners.	42	(37)	48	(46)	+6	54	(20)	46	(21)	-8
O. Requiring teachers to perform clerical work.	35	(30)	40	(38)	+5	53	(16)	63	(24)	+10
J. Supervising instruction.	28	(25)	43	(42)	+15	44	(11)	83	(35)	+39
F. Giving special attention to gifted students.	34	(30)	39	(37)	+5	53	(16)	70	(26)	+17
D. Handling major disciplinary problems.	23	(20)	32	(30)	+9	70	(14)	57	(17)	-13

Table 7-1 (Cont.)

Source of Expectations	Index of Exposure to Role Conflict				Difference in Exposure: Men's Index minus Women's	Index of Reaction to Role Conflict				Difference in Exposure: Men's Index minus Women's
	Women		Men			Women		Men		
Teachers and the principal's administrative superiors	Index	(N)	Index	(N)		Index	(N)	Index	(N)	
P. Assigning teachers to classes they prefer.	29	(22)	39	(34)	+10	64	(14)	53	(18)	-11
A. Promoting certain students.	38	(34)	38	(37)	0	71	(24)	78	(29)	+7
E. Grouping students by ability.	34	(30)	38	(35)	+4	67	(20)	60	(21)	-7
G. Setting a school policy in assigning homework	39	(33)	37	(35)	-2	49	(16)	59	(20)	+10
Q. Permitting teacher participation in administrative decision-making.	32	(28)	40	(38)	+8	39	(11)	56	(19)	+11
R. Emphasizing extra-curricular activities.	20	(15)	30	(27)	+10	47	(7)	48	(13)	+1
L. Setting up programs for the "culturally deprived" child.	27	(19)	25	(21)	-2	53	(10)	48	(10)	-5

administrative decision-making." (Sixty-two per cent of the men principals report exposure to conflict in this area, whereas 36 percent of the women principals do so.) Examination of the size of the difference for the three sets of counter-positions shows that the largest differences were reported for teacher-teacher conflicts. We have already noted the fact that men principals are more frequently exposed to conflict than women principals in each of the 14 areas of teacher-teacher conflict. These two facts indicate that conflicting expectations among their subordinates (the teachers) pose a more difficult problem for men principals than for women principals. The differences in frequency of exposure are smaller for teacher-parent or teacher-administrator conflict.

The differences between men and women principals in reaction to role conflict are similar to the differences in exposure. The men principals react more intensely than the women to 10 of the 12 areas of teacher-parent conflict, to 9 of the 14 areas of teacher-administrator conflict, and to 13 of the 14 areas of teacher-teacher conflict. These differences in the indices of reaction indicate that the men principals are more likely, when exposed to a role conflict, to experience a problem as a result of the conflict.

While a detailed study of the items on role conflict yields valuable information, there is also a need for summarizing the information provided by the responses to the items. The long list of items is difficult to deal with, especially when dealing with the relation of exposure or reaction to role conflict to other factors such as the sex of the principal. Summary scores based on a number of items are more reliable than indices based on a single item, and such scores can give clarity and efficiency to the analysis. Accordingly, cumulative scales were developed to measure a principal's exposure and reaction to role conflict. After describing these scales, a second test of hypothesis 1 will be presented.

Cumulative Scales for the Measurement of Exposure and Reaction to Role Conflict

Two sets of considerations were influential in the construction of the summary scores. First, conflicts arising from the different sets of counter-positions should not be combined. The areas in which the principal experiences teacher-parent conflict are not the same as the areas in which he experiences teacher-teacher conflict, and it is important not to combine them into a single score. Second, cumulative scales were desired to guarantee measurement along a single dimension.[1] The objective was to construct a six-item Guttman "pure" scale if possible. If this were not possible, Stouffer's H-technique would be used to construct a scale composed of contrived items, representing at least seven of the original items.

These considerations proved to be feasible, and scales were constructed for exposure to conflicting expectations from *each* of the three sources. Every principal (with a few exceptions, who did not respond to all the items) received three scores for exposure to role conflict, one for conflict from each set of counter-positions. The Guttman technique was used for scaling six items on exposure to teacher-parent conflict, while the H-technique was used for teacher-administrator and teacher-teacher conflicts. Four contrived items, including ten original items, were devised for the scale measuring exposure to teacher-administrator conflict. Three contrived items, including seven original items, were devised for the scale measuring exposure to conflict within the teacher group. (Full details for these scales are presented in Appendix B.)

Reaction to role conflict presented especially difficult problems for scale construction. The principal's reaction to the conflict, as indicated by the severity of the problem created by it, can be measured only for those conflicts to which he is actually exposed. Only a fraction of the principals were exposed to any particular conflict, so that a scale based on a number of items might include the reaction of a number of persons who were *not* exposed to one or more conflicts. This would have required the imputation of responses, in a complicated procedure of doubtful accuracy. The alternative for a given set of scale items was to reduce the sample by eliminating any principal who had *not* been exposed to conflicts on all of the items. This would reduce the size of the sample but would insure sound measures for the remainder. After some experimentation, this latter alternative was selected, and Guttman scales of four items each were constructed for each of the three scores.

Table 7-2 shows the distribution of scale scores for exposure and reaction to role conflict. Complete information on these scales is available in Appendix B. In reading Table 7-2 and subsequent tables employing the scale scores, it is important to note that the scales for exposure to role conflict have differing numbers of items. For this reason mean scores for the three scales measuring exposure to role conflict should not be compared with each other. The scale for teacher-parent conflict has six items, with a mean of 3.80. The scale for teacher-administrator conflict

Table 7-2. Distribution of Scale Scores for Exposure and Reaction to Role Conflict

Source of conflicting expectations	(No scale score assigned)	Number of Principals Scale Scores 0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Number to whom scores assigned	Mean	Standard deviation
		Exposure to Role Conflict									
Teachers and parents	(14)	48	51	36	65	59	71	157	487	3.80	2.08
Teachers and administrators	(6)	166	79	77	74	99	-	-	495	1.72	1.54
Teachers disagreeing with other teachers	(6)	149	59	83	203	-	-	-	494	1.69	1.28
		Reaction to Role Conflict									
Teachers and parents	(344)	23	26	44	32	32	-	-	157	2.15	1.33
Teachers and administrators	(384)	22	18	30	23	24	-	-	117	2.08	1.39
Teachers disagreeing with other teachers	(352)	23	33	36	34	23	-	-	149	2.01	1.30

has four items and a mean of 1.72, while the scale for teacher-teacher conflict has three items and a mean of 1.69. In subsequent tables, for each of these three scales the principals will be divided into three groups representing Low, Medium, and High degrees of exposure to conflict.

The three scales for reaction to role conflict are each based on four items, with similar means and standard deviations. However, the items in each scale are not identical with those used in the other scales for reaction to conflict. Comparison between the "reaction" scales should therefore be made with this reservation in mind.

Sex and Role Conflict (continued)

Examination of the individual items has shown that the prediction advanced in hypothesis 1 is correct: men principals are more frequently exposed to role conflict than women principals. It is appropriate to inquire whether a similar comparison employing scale scores instead of item indices will lead to the same finding.

For exposure to role conflict, the comparison of the mean scale scores in Table 7-3 leads to the same conclusion as the comparison of the item indices in Table 7-1. Men principals report more frequent exposure to role conflict than women principals, verifying the prediction of hypothesis 1. The differences are statistically significant for two of the three sets of counter-positions: teacher-parent conflict and teacher-teacher conflict. The difference between the mean score for teacher-administrator conflict experienced by men and that for women principals is in the predicted direction but not statistically significant.

The comparison of mean scores for reaction to role conflict is based

Table 7-3. Exposure and Reaction to Role Conflict (Scale Scores)*
by Sex of Principal (Elementary Schools Only)

Source of conflicting expectations	Exposure to Role Conflict (mean scale scores) Women	(N)	Men	(N)	Probability of the difference less than. . .
Teachers and parents	3.06	(88)	3.94	(94)	.01
Teachers and administrators	1.35	(91)	1.57	(96)	not significant
Teachers disagreeing with other teachers	1.18	(91)	1.74	(95)	.05
	Reaction to Role Conflict (mean scale scores)				
Teachers and parents	1.62	(13)	1.82	(28)	Not computed -- see note on significance
Teachers and administrators	2.33	(12)	2.08	(24)	
Teachers disagreeing with other teachers	2.06	(13)	1.77	(26)	

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*In this study, the statistical significance of the findings will be assessed whenever a specific prediction is tested. (The level of significance is the probability that the null hypothesis can be rejected, where the null hypothesis is that there is no association between the two factors under consideration.) The test used will be appropriate to the prediction: a comparison between two means will utilize a critical ratio, whereas a comparison between several means will utilize the analysis of variance.

For certain tables (such as 7-4 and 7-5) no level of significance is reported. In these tables the interest is not in assessing the over-all accuracy of the prediction but in determining the conditions under which the predicted relationship may be observed. The intent is to inquire whether the relationship is to be found in each sub-classification of the table.

on fewer cases. The men principals tend to receive higher scores on reaction to teacher-parent conflict, whereas the women principals tend to receive higher scores on reaction to teacher-administrator and teacher-teacher conflict. (The direction of these differences was not predicted by an hypothesis.) It will be noted that for reaction to role conflict the conclusion reached on the basis of the scale scores in Table 7-3 differs from the conclusion based on the examination of the individual items in Table 7-1. This contradiction is due to the fact that the scale scores for reaction to role conflict are constructed only for a portion of the total sample. The principals to whom "reaction" scores could be assigned were those principals exposed to a high degree of conflict. This fact introduces a bias into the analysis of the scale scores for reaction to role conflict.

The relationship between sex of the principal and exposure to role conflict can be examined to determine the effect of other factors in the principal's situation. It is possible, for instance, that the differences in exposure to conflict may be due to some factor other than sex-role. If this factor is independent of the training, experience and personality of the individual principal, the observed difference between the sexes may not be due to the sex-role of the principal but to the effect of the additional factor.

Such a factor is the size of the school that the principal administers. A comparison of the men and women elementary school principals indicates that, although their situations do not differ in many respects (such as the socio-economic status of the school community), there is a tendency for men principals to be in charge of larger schools. Of the men elementary school principals in the sample, 50 per cent are in charge of schools with more than 700 pupils, whereas only 28 per cent of the women administer schools of this size. It might be that in the larger school, with its more numerous and varied faculty, the principal is more frequently exposed to role conflict. To determine whether the size of school is responsible for the finding that men principals are more exposed to conflict, it is necessary to control for the influence of school size.

Accordingly, the 189 elementary schools in the sample have been grouped into three categories based on the number of students enrolled. Table 7-4 shows, for each category of school size, the exposure to role conflict of men and women principals.

The data in Table 7-4 demonstrate that the sex differences in exposure to role conflict are not due to the effect of school size. When the variations in school size are controlled, differences in exposure to conflict may still be observed. In eight of the nine comparisons in Table 7-4, men principals are more frequently exposed to conflict than women principals. In the small schools, men are more exposed to conflict from all three sets of counter-positions. In the medium-sized schools, men are more exposed to conflict from two of the three sets of counter-positions. The one exception is exposure to teacher-administrator conflict, where the women principals report a greater degree of exposure. In the large schools, the men principals are more frequently exposed to conflict arising from all sets of counter-positions.

Table 7-4. Sex of Principal and Exposure to Role Conflict, by Size of School (Elementary Schools Only)

Size of School (No. of Students)	Source of Conflicting Expectations	Mean Scale Scores				Direction Predicted by Hypothesis + = Correct - = Incorrect	All Elementary Principals	
		Women	(N)	Men	(N)			
Small (160-534)	Teachers and parents	2.76	(33)	3.86	(28)	+	3.26	(61)
	Teachers and administrators	1.24	(33)	1.66	(29)	+	1.44	(62)
	Teachers disagreeing with other teachers	1.24	(33)	1.90	(29)	+	1.55	(62)
Medium (543-750)	Teachers and parents	3.14	(35)	3.85	(27)	+	3.45	(62)
	Teachers and administrators	1.43	(37)	1.19	(27)	-	1.33	(64)
	Teachers disagreeing with other teachers	1.11	(37)	1.31	(26)	+	1.19	(63)
Large (710-3,932)	Teachers and parents	3.40	(20)	4.10	(40)	+	3.87	(60)

Table 7-4 (Cont.)

		Mean Scale Scores						
Size of School (No. of Students)	Source of Conflicting Expectations	Women	(N)	Men	(N)	Direction Predicted by Hypothesis + = Correct - = Incorrect	All Elementary Principals	
Large (Cont.)	Teachers and administrators	1.38	(21)	1.78	(41)	+	1.65	(62)
	Teachers disagreeing with other teachers	1.19	(21)	1.98	(41)	+	1.71	(62)

The fact that men principals tend to be in larger schools does not account for their greater exposure to role conflict. The evidence in Table 7-4, however, suggests an additional finding: principals of small schools tend to experience less role conflict than principals of large schools. (The trend is not uniform in the case of the medium-sized schools.) In this group of elementary school principals, the size of the organization evidently has an affect on the administrator's exposure to role conflict. The larger school, with its more numerous faculty, may lead to a wider range of expectations held for the principal and resultant role conflict. The data in Table 7-4 lend support to such an inference.

One of the reasons leading to the prediction of hypothesis 1 was the difference in career patterns between men and women principals. For many men, the elementary school principalship is an intermediate position between teaching and an administrative position elsewhere in the city school system. Men tend to attain the position of principal early in their careers, often without prior teaching experience in the elementary school. The women principals, on the other hand, tend to remain in the principalship for the balance of their active careers. Also, they often spend many years in teaching at the elementary school level before appointment to the principalship.

One indicator of experience is the number of years that a person spent as a school principal. It would appear reasonable that the more time a person had spent in the principalship, the more he (or she) would gain acceptance by the teachers, with the result of decreased exposure to role conflict. The administrative skills of the experienced principal would enable him to anticipate potential conflict and to prevent the development of conflict.

In our sample, the men principals tend to have fewer years of experience in the principalship. A partial test can, therefore, be made of the reasons leading to hypothesis 1. If men and women principals with equal amounts of experience in the principalship are compared, the differences in exposure to role conflict should be decreased. This comparison is undertaken in Table 7-5.

When differences in experience in the principalship are controlled, as they are in Table 7-5, men principals are still more exposed to role conflict than women principals. All nine comparisons show the difference in exposure to conflict. It may be concluded that the greater experience in the principalship of women principals does not account for their less frequent exposure to conflict.

An examination of Table 7-5 also leads to the conclusion that greater experience in the principalship does not cause a sharp reduction of the principal's exposure to role conflict. The mean scale scores for "All Elementary School Principals" show very small differences when the three degrees of experience are compared. There is a slight reduction in teacher-parent conflict and a slight increase in teacher-administrator conflict. The differences between principals with few years in the principalship and those with many years is somewhat greater for teacher-teacher conflict. This lends some support to the reasoning that more experience tends to increase acceptance of the principal's role definition by his teachers.

Table 7-5. Sex of Principal and Exposure to Role Conflict by Years in the Principalship (Elementary Schools Only)

		Mean Scale Scores						
Number of Years in the Principalship	Source of Conflicting Expectations	Women	(N)	Men	(N)	Direction Predicted by Hypothesis + = Correct - = Incorrect	All Elementary Principals	
Low (0-5)	Teachers and parents	3.00	(24)	4.02	(38)	+	3.63	(62)
	Teachers and administrators	1.33	(24)	1.46	(39)	+	1.41	(63)
	Teachers disagreeing with other teachers	1.21	(24)	1.87	(39)	+	1.62	(63)
Medium (6-13)	Teachers and parents	3.12	(33)	3.84	(25)	+	3.43	(58)
	Teachers and administrators	1.44	(34)	1.46	(26)	+	1.45	(60)
	Teachers disagreeing with other teachers	1.41	(34)	1.58	(26)	+	1.48	(60)
High (14-41)	Teachers and parents	3.03	(31)	3.97	(32)	+	3.51	(63)

Table 7-5 (Cont.)

		Mean Scale Scores					
Number of Years in the Principalship	Source of Conflicting Expectations	Women	(N)	Men	(N)	Direction Predicted by Hypothesis + = Correct - = Incorrect	All Elementary Principals	
High (Cont.)	Teachers and administrators	1.27	(33)	1.81	(32)	+	1.54 (65)
	Teachers disagreeing with other teachers	0.91	(33)	1.81	(31)	+	1.34 (64)

The prediction made in hypothesis 1, that men principals would be more frequently exposed to role conflict than women principals, has been shown to be correct. The differences between men and women principals are not an effect of the size of school that the principal administers, nor are they an effect of length of experience in the principalship. Both these factors, however, are related to the principal's exposure to role conflict.

The evidence presented in this section in connection with hypothesis 1 is restricted to the reports of elementary school principals. We turn now to a consideration of hypothesis 2, the evidence for which is the reports of principals of both elementary and secondary schools.

Level of School and Role Conflict

Hypothesis 2 is concerned with the level of school that the principal administers, and it states that:

> Hypothesis 2: When the source of the conflict is the expectations held for the principal by parents and teachers, elementary school principals will be exposed to role conflict more than secondary school principals.

This hypothesis, it will be recalled, is based on the differences between levels of school in the degree of parent involvement. Greater parent involvement in the school would result in more frequent teacher-parent conflict. Since the parents are more closely involved with the elementary schools, it was expected that elementary school principals would be more frequently exposed to teacher-parent conflict than would principals of secondary (junior high and high) schools.

The consideration of the levels of school also involved two other factors, visibility of the principal's action and structural complexity. Visibility was expected to increase the elementary school principal's exposure to conflict, whereas structural complexity was expected to increase the secondary school principal's exposure to conflict. The net effect of these two factors would result in no difference between the exposure to conflict of principals of schools of different levels. Accordingly, no prediction was made for differences based on these two factors.

The data for exposure and reaction to role conflict of the principals of the different levels of school are presented in Table 7-6.

The evidence on exposure to teacher-parent conflicts contained in Table 7-6 demonstrates that the prediction of hypothesis 2 is not correct. Elementary school principals are not more frequently exposed to role conflict than secondary school principals. The mean scale scores indicate that high school principals are most frequently exposed to teacher-parent conflict; exposure of junior high school principals is second, and that of elementary school principals is third. The differences are statistically significant.

From the evidence of Table 7-6, it may also be concluded that the high school principals are more frequently exposed to role conflicts originating from any of the three sets of counter-positions. The exposure of junior high school principals is second in frequency and that of the elementary school principals is third.

Table 7-6. Exposure and Reaction to Role Conflict by Principal's Level of School

Source of Conflicting Expectations	Elementary	(N)	Junior High	(N)	Senior High	(N)	Significance of the difference between means
	Exposure to Role Conflict - Mean Scale Scores						
Teachers and parents	3.52	(183)	3.63	(149)	4.29	(155)	.01*
Teachers and administrators	1.47	(188)	1.75	(146)	1.99	(166)	..
Teachers disagreeing with other teachers	1.48	(187)	1.66	(147)	1.95	(160)	..
	Reaction to Role Conflict - Mean Scale Scores						
Teachers and parents	1.79	(42)	2.17	(47)	2.37	(68)	..
Teachers and administrators	2.17	(35)	1.73	(33)	2.25	(49)	..
Teachers disagreeing with other teachers	1.82	(39)	1.79	(47)	2.29	(63)	..

*(1) The difference between means is not in the direction predicted by the hypothesis. An analysis of variance yields an F of 6.43, indicating that these differences between means are not likely to have occurred by chance.

(2) Tests of significance are computed only where a specific hypothesis is being tested. In the remainder of this table, the interest is in describing the differences between levels.

The consistency of these findings on exposure to role conflict suggests that the reasoning about hypothesis 2 should be revised. One possibility is that the quality rather than the degree of parent involvement should be considered. The kind of interaction between school personnel and parents becomes more stressful in the secondary school. The decisions made during secondary school affect the student's career chances and the parents' hopes, whereas the decisions made during elementary school may not be of such importance to the parents. Negative decisions -- decisions involving failure -- are more frequent in the secondary school. These reasons may account for the high school principal's more frequent exposure to teacher-parent conflict.

An additional revision is needed to explain the differences in exposure to teacher-administrator and teacher-teacher conflict. It was expected that the factors of structural complexity and visibility would have equal and opposite effects, resulting in no difference in exposure to conflict between principals of different levels of school. We have observed, however, that the secondary school principals are most frequently exposed to teacher-administrator and teacher-teacher conflict. With specialized teachers and departments of instruction, the secondary schools are structurally more complex than the elementary schools. The data of Table 7-6 suggest that more emphasis should be placed on the factor of structural complexity in interpreting the pattern of exposure to role conflict.

The mean scale scores for reaction to role conflict in Table 7-6 show that high school principals react more intensely to conflicts than do junior high school and elementary school principals. This order obtains for conflicts arising from any of three sets of counter-positions. (The differences between junior high school and elementary principals are not consistent, however.) The pattern of differences suggests that the position of the high school principal exposes him to more intense conflict than do principalships at the other two levels. When conflicts emerge for the high school principal, they tend to create problems for him. The complexity of the organization that he runs may account for his more intense reaction to role conflicts.

It is important to examine one further possibility, in considering the relationship between level of school and exposure to role conflict. Almost half of the elementary school principals in the sample, but only one-tenth of the secondary school principals, are women. We have seen for the elementary school that women principals tend to be less frequently exposed to conflict than men principals. The observed differences between levels may be due to the different proportion of men and women principals at each level, and Table 7-7 presents evidence on this problem. (Women high school principals are so few in number that they have been combined with women junior high school principals.)

A study of Table 7-7 indicates that men high school principals are the group most frequently exposed to conflict. The group second in frequency of exposure to conflict is composed of male elementary and junior high school principals. The women principals as a group, both elementary and secondary, tend to be less frequently exposed to role conflict.

Table 7-7. Exposure to Role Conflict by Sex of Principal and Level of School

Mean Scale Scores

Source of Conflicting Expectations	Sex of Principal	Level of School Elementary	(N)	Junior High	(N)	Senior High	(N)
Teachers and parents	Women	3.06	(88)	2.43	(28)		
	Men	3.94	(94)	3.02	(127)	4.38	(148)
Teachers and administrators	Women	1.35	(91)	1.25	(28)		
	Men	1.57	(96)	1.84	(124)	2.03	(154)
Teachers disagreeing with other teachers	Women	1.18	(91)	1.25	(28)		
	Men	1.74	(95)	1.73	(125)	1.99	(153)

The effect of level of school, it may be concluded, differs for men and for women principals. For men, the high school principalship involves greater exposure to role conflict (originating from any of three sets of counter-positions) than the principalship of either junior high or elementary schools. For women, the secondary school principalship involves less exposure to teacher-parent conflict than does the elementary school principalship, but no difference in exposure to teacher-teacher or teacher-administrator conflict. The meaning of these differences is not readily apparent. It may be that a process of differential selection is involved: the women who are appointed to the secondary school principalship may be especially skillful administrators, able to reduce role conflict to a minimum level. The selection process may not operate in the same fashion for the men principals.

The relationship between level of school and exposure to role conflict, which was described for all principals in Table 7-6, appears to hold for men but not for women principals. The factors associated with level of school such as degree of client involvement, structural complexity, and visibility, may have a different impact on the conflict experienced by men and women principals.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have examined the effects of two possible determinants of role conflict: the sex-role of the principal and the level of the school administered by the principal. The effects on these relationships of such factors as size of school and prior experience in the principalship have also been considered.

The first hypothesis, that men principals are more frequently exposed to role conflict, was supported; and the second, that elementary principals are more frequently exposed, was not supported.

The following chapter will examine some possible effects of role conflict on the individual and two hypotheses will be tested regarding these effects.

Notes and References for Chapter Seven

1. The problems involved in selecting a summary score and the merits of cumulative scales are discussed in Bert F. Green, "Attitude Measurement," in Gardner Lindzey (ed.), Handbook of Social Psychology (Cambridge: Addison-Wesley, 1954), Vol. I, pp. 335-369.

Chapter 8: Some Effects of Role Conflict

In this chapter the set of hypotheses concerned with the possible effects of role conflict is examined. In speaking of the "effects" of role conflict, it should be clear that no rigorous causal scheme is implied. The only evidence presented here is that of association: that exposure to role conflict is associated with some other condition, such as satisfaction with one's occupation. The reasoning about the hypothesis suggests that role conflict is the antecedent and satisfaction is the consequence, but the empirical evidence shows only simultaneous association. Of the possible effects of role conflict, three have been selected for examination: satisfaction with work, worry about work, and level of career aspiration.

In Chapter Four, a number of hypotheses were advanced about the effects of role conflict. Underlying them is the assumption that role conflict brings with it negative consequences for the principal, exposing him to the possibility of negative sanctions. The negative consequences may affect his attitudes about his role, such as the satisfaction that he derives from his work and his worry about work. This reasoning leads to the hypotheses to be examined in this chapter regarding the effects of exposure and reaction to role conflict.

The measures of exposure and reaction to role conflict are the cumulative scales described in Chapter Seven and presented in full in Appendix B. Satisfaction with work, worry about work, and level of career aspiration are also measured by cumulative scales, presented in Appendix B.

Exposure to Role Conflict and Job Satisfaction

The first of the hypotheses on the effects of role conflict is:

Hypothesis 3-A: The more frequently a principal is exposed to role conflict, the less satisfaction he will derive from his position as principal.

This hypothesis leads to the prediction that the job satisfaction of the principals will decrease as exposure to role conflict increases. The findings relevant to this prediction are presented in Table 8-1. (For purposes of analysis, the scale scores for exposure to role conflict have been grouped into three relative categories of Low, Medium, and High. The objective of the grouping was to place one-third of the principals in each category, although this was not always possible.)

Table 8-1 shows that exposure to role conflict is significantly associated with job satisfaction, in the direction predicted by the hypothesis, for two of the sets of counter-positions. Exposure to teacher-administrator conflict and to teacher-teacher conflict is related to reduced job satisfaction. The differences in the mean job satisfaction scores, for principals exposed to different degrees of parent-teacher conflict, are also in the predicted direction, but in this case the relationship falls short of significance. Evidently teacher-teacher and teacher-administrator conflicts have a greater impact on the principal's job satisfaction than does teacher-parent conflict, although the latter is most frequent of the three. It may be that the teacher-parent conflicts are more readily anticipated by principals and therefore have less effect on their satisfaction.

Table 8-1. Exposure to Role Conflict and Job Satisfaction - All Principals

Source of Conflicting Expectations	Degree of Exposure (Scale Scores)	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Mean	Magnitude of F	Probability of F less than. . .
Teachers and Parents	Low (0-2)	18	32	15	15	19	17	19	2.83	1.83	not significant
	Medium (3-5)	41	38	15	27	27	17	30	2.68		
	High (6)	27	46	15	24	18	12	15	2.36		
Teachers and Administrators	Low (0-1)	22	35	17	22	21	21	28	2.96	4.89	.01
	Medium (2-3)	27	40	14	21	26	12	16	2.51		
	High (4)	39	43	13	26	20	13	19	2.35		
Disagreements within the Teacher Group	Low (0)	25	42	16	24	27	26	35	3.05	8.29	.001
	Medium (1-2)	19	31	16	16	15	8	14	2.48		
	High (3)	44	44	13	29	25	12	14	2.22		

It should be noted that the measure of job satisfaction is composed of items that refer to satisfaction with interpersonal relationships within the school organization. The items are presented in full in Appendix B, and their content may help to explain the pattern of results in Table 8-1.

While Table 8-1 offers support for the hypothesis, it also shows that the relationship is by no means a strong one. There are many principals reporting low exposure to conflict and low job satisfaction, while there are also many reporting the converse. Exposure to conflict is only one of many factors contributing to the principal's satisfaction with his work, and its effect may be decreased or enhanced by the effects of other sources of satisfaction.

We have seen (in Chapter Seven) that exposure to conflict varied considerably when the two following factors were taken into account: the sex of the principal, and the level of school that the principal administers. Men principals consistently reported more frequent exposure to conflict than women principals. Of the three levels, high school principals reported most role conflict, with junior high school principals intermediate in exposure and elementary school principals least exposed. In investigating the relationship between exposure to role conflict and job satisfaction, it is of interest to inquire whether the factors of sex-role or level of school require any modification of the findings. Does the observed relationship hold for men and for women principals considered separately? Table 8-2 shows the association between exposure to role conflict and job satisfaction for each sex group.

Table 8-2. **Exposure to Role Conflict and Job Satisfaction by Sex of Principal**

Source of Conflicting Expectations	Degree of Exposure (Scale Scores)	Mean Scale Scores			
		Women	(N)	Men	(N)
Teachers and Parents	Low (0-2)	2.94	(54)	2.75	(81)
	Medium (3-5)	3.08	(33)	2.58	(157)
	High (6)	1.71	(24)	2.47	(133)
Teachers and Administrators	Low (0-1)	3.13	(54)	2.88	(112)
	Medium (2-3)	2.31	(36)	2.57	(120)
	High (4)	2.38	(29)	2.34	(144)
Disagreements within the Teacher Group	Low (0)	3.07	(67)	3.03	(128)
	Medium (1-2)	2.23	(27)	2.52	(92)
	High (3)	2.08	(25)	2.24	(156)

The relationship between exposure to role conflict and job satisfaction is evidently independent of the effect of sex-role. For each sex group an increase in exposure to conflict is associated with a decrease in job satisfaction. There is a slight suggestion that the relationship is more pronounced in the case of the women principals. It may be that the women are more sensitive to the negative sanctions accompanying exposure to conflict.

Similarly, it may be asked whether the observed relationship holds for principals in each of the different levels of school. Table 8-3 shows the mean job satisfaction score for each category of exposure to conflict separately for principals of each school level.

Despite some deviations from the pattern, the data in Table 8-3 show that the general relationship between exposure to role conflict and job satisfaction obtains at every level of school. With one exception, the "Low Exposure" principals report higher job satisfaction than do the "Medium" and "High Exposure" groups. The exception is the high school principals reporting on teacher-parent conflict. For this group, exposure to conflicting expectations from teachers and parents does not appear to have any clear relationship to job satisfaction. Of the three levels of school, however, the high school principals reported most frequent exposure to conflict. Perhaps they handle teacher-parent conflict in stride without effect on their satisfaction with their jobs.

The conclusion based on Tables 8-2 and 8-3 is that the relationship between exposure to role conflict and job satisfaction is true for principals of either sex and for any level of school, with the single exception

Table 8-3. Exposure to Role Conflict and Job Satisfaction by Level of School

Source of Conflicting Expectations	Degree of Exposure (Scale Scores)	Mean Scale Scores					
		Elementary	(N)	Junior High	(N)	Senior High	(N)
Teachers and	Low (0-2)	2.91	(65)	3.02	(42)	2.36	(28)
Parents	Medium (3-5)	2.52	(66)	2.95	(63)	2.58	(66)
	High (6)	2.00	(52)	2.59	(44)	2.49	(61)
Teachers and	Low (0-1)	2.74	(73)	3.41	(49)	2.84	(44)
Administrators	Medium (2-3)	2.21	(61)	2.73	(44)	2.67	(51)
	High (4)	2.54	(54)	2.42	(53)	2.14	(66)
Disagreements	Low (0)	2.83	(84)	3.64	(59)	2.71	(52)
within the	Medium (1-2)	2.18	(50)	2.92	(36)	2.45	(33)
Teacher Group	High (3)	2.34	(53)	1.89	(53)	2.36	(75)

noted. These findings offer strong support for hypothesis 3-A, which predicted the relationship.

Exposure to Role Conflict and Worry

In addition to lower job satisfaction, increased worry about one's work may be an effect of exposure to role conflict. Hypothesis 3-B states:

> Hypothesis 3-B: The more frequently a principal is exposed to role conflict, the more he will worry about aspects of his work.

A positive relationship is predicted between the principal's exposure to role conflict and his worry about his work. The hypothesis is based on the idea that the inability to meet both sets of incompatible expectations may arouse anxiety, and the anxiety may become associated with other aspects of role performance. The principal will tend to worry about such eventualities as his failure to perform effectively in his role, or the possible actions of persons in counter-positions. The measure of worry is a 6-item Guttman scale, described in full in Appendix B.

As Table 8-4 shows, hypothesis 3-B receives full support from these data on the principalship. The more the principals are exposed to role conflict, the more they tend to worry about their work. This is true for all three measures of exposure to role conflict. Conflicting expectations from any of three sources have a notable impact on the principal's worry about his work.

From the distribution of the worry scale scores in Table 8-4, it is evident that exposure to role conflict is not the sole determinant of worry. Many principals exposed to conflict do not have high worry scores,

Table 8-4. Exposure to Role Conflict and Worry about Work - All Principals

Source of Conflicting Expectations	Degree of Exposure (Scale Scores)	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Mean	Magnitude of F	Probability of F less than. . .
Teachers and	Low (0-2)	23	13	36	33	17	9	4	2.38		
Parents	Medium (3-5)	14	13	42	43	31	26	25	3.25	12.07	.001
	High (6)	8	15	29	38	33	14	20	3.24		
Teachers and	Low (0-1)	25	15	39	35	23	16	12	2.68		
Administrators	Medium (2-3)	15	12	29	39	31	18	12	3.03	3.91	.05
	High (4)	8	14	40	41	31	15	24	3.24		
Disagreements	Low (0)	32	18	53	38	26	15	12	2.52		
within the	Medium (1-2)	8	6	26	34	21	13	11	3.15	8.00	.001
Teacher Group	High (3)	8	17	29	43	38	20	26	3.38		

and others who are less exposed to conflict do have high worry scores. The number of deviant cases indicates that other factors besides exposure to role conflict produce anxiety for the principal.

In considering the association of exposure to role conflict with worry about work, it is important to inquire whether the association holds for major sub-groups in the sample population. The sub-groups in question are the two sex groups and the principals of different levels of school. Men and women differ in their experience with role conflict; does exposure to conflict have a differential impact on the degree to which they worry about their work? Similarly, does exposure to role conflict have a differential impact on principals at different levels of school?

Table 8-5 shows that the relationship between exposure to role conflict and worry holds for each of the sex groups: the more they are exposed to conflict, the more they tend to worry about their work. An examination of the mean scores suggests, however, a differential impact of exposure to role conflict. The mean differences are greater for women than for men, indicating that exposure to role conflict has a greater effect on the woman principal. This difference is especially marked for exposure to teacher-teacher conflict: the "Low" women have a mean worry score of 2.11, while the "High" women have a mean of 3.56. The difference between the means for the female "Low" and "High" groups is 1.45, whereas comparable difference for the men is 0.62. The comparison indicates that women principals may be more sensitive than men to conflicting expectations held for them by their teachers.

Level of school is another factor associated with exposure to role

Table 8-5. Exposure to Role Conflict and Worry about Work by Sex of Principal

Source of Conflicting Expectations	Degree of Exposure (Scale Scores)	Mean Scale Scores			
		Women	(N)	Men	(N)
Teachers and Parents	Low (0-2)	2.15	(54)	2.53	(81)
	Medium (3-5)	3.19	(37)	3.26	(157)
	High (6)	3.13	(24)	3.26	(133)
Teachers and Administrators	Low (0-1)	2.25	(53)	2.88	(112)
	Medium (2-3)	2.61	(36)	3.16	(120)
	High (4)	3.38	(29)	3.21	(144)
Disagreements within the Teacher Group	Low (0)	2.11	(66)	2.73	(128)
	Medium (1-2)	3.07	(27)	3.17	(92)
	High (3)	3.56	(25)	3.35	(156)

conflict. Table 8-6 presents the relationship between exposure and worry, for each school level.

It is apparent that exposure to role conflict is associated with increased worry about work, for principals at every level of school. The relationship is stronger at the elementary and high school levels than it is at the junior high school level. The similarity of the patterns for the three school levels, however, indicates that the hypothesis does not require reformulation.

All the relationships in Tables 8-4, 8-5, and 8-6 are in the direction predicted by the hypothesis associating exposure to role conflict with worry about work. Among the possible consequences of role conflict is increased anxiety and worry about one's work.

Reaction to Role Conflict, Job Satisfaction, and Worry

The two preceding sections have examined possible consequences of *exposure* to role conflict. The hypotheses to be investigated now deal with the severity of the role conflict, as indicated by the principal's *reaction* to it. Reaction is defined as the principal's report of whether the role conflict caused a problem for him. As was indicated in Chapter Seven, scale scores for reaction to role conflict could be constructed only for those principals exposed to conflict. This restriction limited the number of principals to whom scale scores could be assigned for reaction to role conflict.

A high scale score on reaction to role conflict indicates that when the principal was exposed to conflict it frequently created a problem for him. The presence of a problem implies the likelihood of negative

Table 8-6. Exposure to Role Conflict and Worry about Work by Level of School

Source of Conflicting Expectations	Degree of Exposure (Scale Scores)	Mean Scale Scores					
		Elementary	(N)	Junior High	(N)	Senior High	(N)
Teachers and Parents	Low (0-2)	2.45	(65)	2.38	(42)	2.21	(28)
	Medium (3-5)	3.33	(66)	3.17	(63)	3.23	(65)
	High (6)	3.13	(52)	3.16	(44)	3.39	(61)
Teachers and Administrators	Low (0-1)	2.60	(73)	2.84	(49)	2.63	(43)
	Medium (2-3)	3.00	(61)	2.95	(44)	3.14	(51)
	High (4)	3.22	(54)	3.02	(53)	3.42	(66)
Disagreements within the Teacher Group	Low (0)	2.40	(84)	2.71	(59)	2.49	(51)
	Medium (1-2)	3.16	(50)	2.92	(36)	3.39	(33)
	High (3)	3.43	(53)	3.25	(53)	3.44	(75)

consequences for the principal, and these consequences may affect his attitudes about his work. Hypothesis 3-C predicts the direction of the relationship between reaction to role conflict and job satisfaction:

Hypothesis 3-C: The more strongly a principal reacts to exposure to role conflict, the less satisfaction he will derive from his work.

The evidence in Table 8-7 shows that there is substantial support for the hypothesis for conflicts arising from two of the sets of counter-positions. The relationship between reaction and job satisfaction is negative (as predicted) and significant for conflicting expectations held by teachers and administrators and for conflicting expectations held within the teacher group. It is neither negative nor significant for conflicting expectations held by teachers and parents suggesting that this source of conflict does not have a general impact on the principal's job satisfaction.

The number of cases is too small to permit controls to determine whether the relationship holds for each sub-group, when the principals are classified by sex or by school level. It should be noted, however, that in the group of principals to whom scores on reaction to role conflict could be assigned there are relatively few women. Approximately 10 per cent of this group is female, as compared with 25 per cent in the total sample. The relationship between reaction to role conflict and job satisfaction, therefore, applies only to the population of men principals.

Another possible effect of reaction to role conflict is predicted by Hypothesis 3-D:

Table 8-7. Reaction to Role Conflict and Job Satisfaction

Source of Conflicting Expectations	Degree of Reaction (Scale Scores)	Mean	(N)*	Magnitude of F	Probability of F less than. . .
Teachers and Parents	Low (0-1)	2.27	(49)	1.82	not significant
	Medium (2)	2.86	(44)		
	High (3-4)	2.25	(64)		
Teachers and Administrators	Low (0-1)	2.90	(40)	7.27	.01
	Medium (2)	2.73	(30)		
	High (3-4)	1.43	(47)		
Disagreements within the Teacher Group	Low (0-1)	2.96	(56)	6.29	.01
	Medium (2)	2.08	(36)		
	High (3-4)	1.70	(57)		

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*A reduced number of principals were assigned scale scores for reaction to role conflict. See Chapter Seven for explanation.

Hypothesis 3-D: The more strongly a principal reacts to exposure to role conflict, the more he will worry about aspects of his work.

All the relationships in Table 8-8, between reaction to role conflict and worry about work, are in the predicted direction. Only one, however, is statistically significant: reaction to teacher-parent conflict is associated with increased worry. In only this instance does the hypothesis receive support from the data.

A comparison of Tables 8-7 and 8-8 shows that the principals experience different effects of reaction, depending on the source of conflicting expectations. For job satisfaction, reaction to both teacher-teacher conflicts and teacher-administrator conflicts has a significant effect, but reaction to teacher-parent conflicts does not. This pattern is reversed in considering worry (Table 8-8): reaction to teacher-teacher conflicts and teacher-administrator conflicts is not significantly related to worry, but reaction to teacher-parent conflicts is related. In this context, job satisfaction appears to be affected by conflicts within with organization. Worry, on the other hand, is affected by conflicts between organization members and clients.

Exposure to Role Conflict and Career Aspirations

The evidence has been reviewed for two possible effects of exposure and reaction to role conflict: satisfaction with work and worry about the work. An additional relationship will be examined here, the effect of exposure on the career plans and desires of the school principal.

Table 8-8. Reaction to Role Conflict and Worry about Work

Source of Conflicting Expectations	Degree of Reaction (Scale Scores)	Mean	(N)*	Magnitude of F	Probability of F less than. . .
Teachers and Parents	Low (0-2)	2.88	(49)	3.22	.05
	Medium (3-5)	3.25	(44)		
	High (6)	3.72	(64)		
Teachers and Administrators	Low (0-1)	3.08	(40)	1.21	not significant
	Medium (2-3)	3.30	(30)		
	High (4)	3.57	(47)		
Disagreements within the Teacher Group	Low (0)	3.07	(50)	1.86	not significant
	Medium (1-2)	3.47	(36)		
	High (3)	3.72	(57)		

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* A reduced number of principals were assigned scale scores for reaction to role conflict. See Chapter Seven for explanation.

The direction of the relationship is specified in hypothesis 4:

> Hypothesis 4: The more frequently a principal is exposed to role conflict, the more he will tend to seek other positions, as indicated by his level of career aspiration.

This hypothesis is predicted upon two assumptions. One is that level of career aspiration has two components: a positive desire to move ahead to positions of greater power, prestige, or reward; and a negative motivation to move away from the worries and drawbacks of the present position. A second assumption is that exposure to role conflict constitutes a significant factor in determining the negative component, so that persons exposed to conflict will be motivated to seek other positions.

The measure of career aspiration is an H-technique cumulative scale of four contrived items, including six original items. These items asked for the intensity with which the principal wished to attain a number of positions in the school system hierarchy, such as principalships with more prestige or pay, or positions in the city school administration, such as assistant superintendent. One item also asked about the desire to attain a position of importance in professional educational organizations. (Full details of the scale are presented in Appendix B.)

Table 8-9 shows the relationship between exposure to role conflict from each of the sets of counter-positions, and level of career aspiration. There is a slight tendency for principals with medium or high degrees of exposure to conflict to have higher levels of career aspiration. None of the relationships is significant, so that hypothesis 4 does not receive support from these data.

Table 8-9. Exposure to Role Conflict and Level of Career Aspiration - All Principals

Source of Conflicting Expectations	Degree of Exposure (Scale Scores)	0	1	2	3	Mean	Magnitude of F	Probability of F less than. . .
Teachers and Parents	Low (0-2)	29	40	43	23	1.44	2.07	not significant
	Medium (3-5)	28	56	72	39	1.62		
	High (6)	28	45	53	31	1.55		
Teachers and Administrators	Low (0-1)	36	44	57	28	1.47	1.08	not significant
	Medium (2-3)	22	49	55	30	1.60		
	High (4)	26	51	61	35	1.61		
Disagreements within the Teacher Group	Low (0)	42	57	69	27	1.42	2.57	not significant
	Medium (1-2)	18	30	46	24	1.64		
	High (3)	26	57	56	42	1.63		

One possibility that would account for the lack of association is the fact that the population of principals is known to differ in two important ways, by sex and by level of school. For example, women principals are less frequently exposed to role conflict, and their career aspirations tend to be lower than those of men principals. For these reasons, exposure to role conflict might affect the career aspirations of men principals, but not those of women.

To explore this possibility, the relationship between exposure to role conflict and level of career aspiration was examined separately for each sex group and principals of each school level. No significant association was found in any of the sub-groups. (The details of this analysis have been omitted here as being of limited interest. They appear in Appendix C, Table 1.) A slight trend in the direction predicted by the hypothesis was evident in several of the sub-groups, but the magnitude of the differences is approximately the same as shown in Table 8-9. The absence of association is not due to the influence of sex role or of school level.

An explanation of the lack of support for hypothesis 4 may lie in the inaccuracy of the second assumption on which the hypothesis is based. The assumption was made that exposure to role conflict constitutes a significant factor in the negative component of career aspiration (the desire to move away from the present position). It may be, however, that the annoyances of the present position, such as exposure to role conflict, play a relatively small part in determining the individual's career aspirations. Career plans may be based on more enduring considerations:

professional goals, personal ambitions, or family needs. The effects of exposure to role conflict may be short-run in nature, contributing to such immediate factors as decreased satisfaction with one's work and worry about it, but not to such long-run factors as one's hopes and plans for a career.

This chapter has presented evidence bearing on a set of hypotheses concerning the effects of role conflict. Substantial support was found for the association between exposure to role conflict and job satisfaction, between exposure to role conflict and worry about work, and between reaction to role conflict and job satisfaction. Partial support was found for the association between reaction to role conflict and worry about work. Very little support was found for the relationship between exposure to conflict and level of career aspiration.

Chapter 9: Conclusion

The topic of this study is the role conflicts experienced by persons occupying a position in an organization. In Part I we described the background, hypotheses, and methods of the research, while in Part II we presented the findings. This concluding chapter summarizes the findings of the research and points out further problems suggested by the investigation. The findings will be discussed under two headings: the description of role conflict and the evidence bearing on the hypotheses.

The Description of Role Conflict in the Principalship

Chapter Six described the principals' exposure and reaction to role conflict. It indicated that principals are frequently exposed to role conflict: a majority of the principals reported exposure to conflict for 26 of the 40 areas investigated. The principals' reaction to the role conflicts showed that problems frequently arose as a result of exposure to conflict. In every one of the 40 areas, of the principals who were exposed to conflict, over half or them reported that the conflict had created a problem for them.

The study investigated expectations held for the principal by persons in three different sets of counter-positions. These sets were: 1) teachers and parents; 2) teachers and administrators; and 3) teachers versus other teachers. Expectations for the principals held by persons in these different sets resulted in differing degrees of exposure and reaction to role conflict. Exposure to teacher-parent conflict was most frequently reported by the principals. Teacher-teacher conflict was second in terms of frequency of exposure, and teacher-administrator conflict was third.

The pattern for intensity of reaction to conflict was similar: teacher-parent conflict was highest in intensity, followed by teacher-teacher conflict and then by teacher-administrator conflict.

Two lines of explanation were suggested to account for this ordering of the conflicts experienced by the principal from the different sets of counter-positions. The first involved the boundaries of social systems. Teacher-parent conflicts, it was argued, are most frequent and create most problems because one of the counter-positions, the parent's, does (not belong to the school social system. Teacher-parent conflicts take place across a system boundary, while teacher-teacher and teacher-administrator conflicts take place within the school system.

A second line of explanation involves the interaction between the principal and the persons occupying counter-positions. The principals are more frequently exposed and react more intensely to teacher-teacher conflict than they do to teacher-administrator conflict. The principal's interaction with the teachers is frequent and intense, whereas his position tends to isolate him from his administrative superiors. These differences in interaction may account for the differences in exposure and reaction to conflict.

For each set of counter-positions, we noted the areas creating the most frequent exposure to conflict for the principals, as well as the areas where conflict evoked the most intense reaction. Exposure to conflicting expectations held by teachers and parents was most frequently reported for the area of "promoting certain students." (Eighty-one per cent of the principals reported exposure to this conflict.) The most intense reaction (83 per cent of those exposed) to a conflict area was reported for "setting uniform grading standards for the school." For both these areas, teacher-parent conflict may involve the tension between the particularistic expectations of the parents for the treatment of their child and the universalistic expectations of the teachers who wish to maintain uniform standards for all children.

Fourteen of the 40 areas in the questionnaire dealt with potential conflict between teachers and administrators. Of the 14, exposure to conflict was most frequent (60 per cent) over the issue of "introducing changes into the instructional program." Conflicts in this area also created most difficulty for the principals, as shown by the index of their reaction (68 per cent). In general, the administrators wished to introduce the change, whereas the teachers were opposed to it.

For exposure to teacher-teacher conflict, two areas were reported more often than any other. Sixty-four per cent of the principals said that they were exposed to role conflict over the issue of the introduction of changes in instruction. Sixty-four per cent also reported exposure to conflict in the matter of setting uniform grading standards. Reaction to teacher-teacher conflict was most intense for the area of setting uniform grading standards; of the principals exposed to this conflict, 77 per cent of them reported that it created a problem for them.

The incidence of exposure and the intensity of reaction to role conflict, for all sets of counter-positions, confirm the picture of the principalship as a position whose occupant must deal with varied and often incompatible expectations. The principal is a "middleman," confronted by the conflicting expectations of persons in a number of counter-positions and the problems that arise from these expectations.

The Hypotheses and the Evidence

Of the four hypotheses, two were concerned with possible determinants of role conflict and two with its effects for the principal. Hypothesis 1 predicted that, for the elementary school principals, men principals would be more frequently exposed and react more intensely to role conflict than women principals. The prediction proved to be correct for exposure to conflict but only partially correct for reaction to role conflict. Men principals reported more frequent exposure to conflict for all three sets of counter-positions (teacher-parent, teacher-administrator, and teacher-teacher conflict). Their reaction was more intense than that of women to teacher-parent conflict only.

The reasoning for hypothesis 1 was based on several considerations, among them the fact that women principals tend to have had more experience in the principalship than men principals. It was assumed that experience might reduce exposure to role conflict. When the differences in experience were controlled, however, the differences in exposure to conflict between men and women principals were not affected. This finding suggested that prior experience in the principalship was not a factor accounting for the different exposure to conflict of men and women principals.

Other considerations also led to the prediction advanced in hypothesis 1, and these remain to be investigated. The degree of commitment to the position as principal may account for the differences in exposure to conflict. Women principals tend to remain in the principalship, while men principals often move on to other administrative positions. It is also possible that the composition of the teaching staff may affect the principal's experience of conflict: women principals may gain readier acceptance from older more experienced teachers or from faculties where women predominate in number. A third possibility is that the major reference group of the principal plays a part in determining his exposure to role conflict. The principals whose major reference group is the teachers may gain readier acceptance from the teachers and be less exposed to conflict than principals whose reference group is school administrators. If women principals identify with the teachers more often than the men principals, this fact might account for the differences in exposure to role conflict.

Hypothesis 2 predicted that elementary school principals would be more exposed to teacher-parent conflict than would principals of secondary schools. (No predictions were made regarding exposure or reaction to conflict arising from the expectations held by the other two sets of counter-positions: teachers and administrators, and disagreements within the teacher group.) The prediction of differences in teacher-parent conflict was based on differences in the degree of client involvement, and the data did not confirm the prediction. It was found that secondary school principals were more exposed to conflict than elementary school principals for all sets of counter-positions.

These findings required a re-examination of the reasoning which led to hypothesis 2. It was suggested that the quality of client involvement as well as its frequency needs to be taken into account in predicting the exposure to parent-teacher conflict. If the involvement of the clients is frequent but the administrator's decisions are not critical ones for the client's interests, exposure to conflicting expectations from client and subordinate may be infrequent. On the other hand, where the decisions involve crucial interests of the client, conflicting expectations for the administrator may develop, even though the frequency of client involvement is low. This reformulation suggests that high school principals reported most frequent exposure to teacher-parent conflict because of the very important nature of the decisions made for students by the high school principal. Elementary school principals, faced with less crucial decisions, were less exposed to role conflict.

A second revision would put more emphasis on one of the factors originally considered in the reasoning for hypothesis 2. This was the factor of structural complexity, which was expected to increase the principal's exposure to role conflict. It may be that this factor is more important than the element of visibility and that its effect accounts for the observed differences between high school and elementary school principals. A comparison of various types of schools of the same level, each with differing degrees of structural complexity, would provide evidence on this question.

A second group of hypotheses predicted some effects of exposure and reaction to role conflict. Hypotheses 3-A, predicting a negative relationship between exposure to conflict and job dissatisfaction, and 3-B, predicting a positive relationship between exposure and worry about work, were supported by the data. Principals who were highly exposed to role conflict were less satisfied with their jobs and more worried about their work than those who were not highly exposed.

Hypotheses 3-C and 3-D predicted that the principals who reacted intensely to role conflicts would report lowered job satisfaction and increased worry. These hypotheses tended to be supported by the evidence: all the relationships were in the predicted direction and half of them were statistically significant. It appeared that reaction to teacher-parent conflict was highly associated with worry, but the association was not so strong between worry and teacher-administrator conflict or teacher-teacher conflict. The reverse appears to be true for the relationship between reaction to conflict and job satisfaction: reaction to teacher-parent conflict has less effect than does reaction to teacher-administrator or teacher-teacher conflict. This pattern of relationships suggests that the principal's worry about work is affected by his conflict experience with the parents, whereas his job satisfaction is more strongly affected by conflict internal to the organization between teachers and administrators or within the teacher group.

Hypothesis 4 predicted an association between frequency of exposure to role conflict and level of career aspiration. The data did not confirm this prediction, and the application of controls for sex of principal and level of school showed no distinct association in any of the subgroups. It was suggested that career aspirations may not be determined by immediate situational experience, such as exposure to role conflict, but may derive from more enduring circumstances.

Comments on Theory and Method

This study has indicated some of the strengths and weaknesses of the theoretical formulations that guided the research and the analysis of the data. In the preceding sections of this chapter some suggestions were made about further analysis of the data on role conflict. It is appropriate here to comment on the theoretical aspects of the study. A note will also be included concerning the method of field work.

Theories of role conflict have dealt more with the resolution than the development of the conflict. The tendency has been to assume the existence of conflicting expectations rather than to inquire as to their source. An effort has been made here to identify some possible determinants of exposure and reaction to conflict. It is of special interest to link the characteristics of organizations to the principal's report of role conflict. Do frequency of interaction, client involvement, and structural complexity have the effect of increasing exposure to role conflict in all types of organizations? Are other characteristics of the organization equally important in determining the exposure to role conflict? Examples of other important organizational characteristics are the administrator's span of control, and his control over technical specialists.

Characteristics of the person may also have an effect on his experience of role conflict. This study has attempted to link sex-role with exposure and reaction to conflict through a number of intervening variables, among them prior experience in the principalship. It was found that this variable did not account for the observed differences between men and women principals, and this suggests that other characteristics -- perhaps personality traits -- may better account for the sex differences.

A theoretical assumption which provided this study with grounds for a number of correct predictions was the idea that role conflict would be accompanied by negative consequences for the principal. While the predictions for the sample of principals were correct, there were a certain number of deviant cases. The presence of these cases raises an interesting issue: under what circumstances might role conflict not have negative consequences for the principal? One possible answer might involve the principal's definition of the situation. Persons who expect role conflict to occur as part of their work may not experience lowered job satisfaction or increased worry as a result of conflict. Another possibility is that the principal's position may protect him from the impact of negative consequences. Tenure of position, prestige, salary, or other rewards may insulate him from the consequences of exposure to role conflict. Such possibilities might be considered in designing further hypotheses on the effects of role conflict.

In empirical investigation, the researcher should be forewarned that the topic of role conflict is not immediately intelligible to all respondents. It requires a degree of sophistication on the part of the respondent to provide direct information on the role conflicts that he experiences. The difficulty of the topic implies some restriction on the design of an empirical study. If questionnaires are to be employed, they must be carefully designed to insure clarity and intelligibility. There is a danger that the investigator will attempt to cover too many areas of potential conflict, or too many different sets of counter-positions so that the respondent finds it difficult to focus on any particular conflict. In this study the principals were interviewed at length after they had completed the questionnaire. From the reports of the interviews, it appears that some principals did have difficulty in understanding the idea of conflicting expectations. The interviewer was able to interpret the topic to the principal and to evaluate the quality of the principal's responses to the questionnaire. A well-designed questionnaire can cover a wide range of areas and yield a wealth of information. Our experience suggests that the use of questionnaires should be supplemented by some form of personal interview between respondent and investigator.[1]

The data for this study of role conflict have come from the principals of public schools. It is hoped that the findings may be of use to the profession of school administration and to the persons engaging in that profession. At the same time, the study has been carried out with a problem of social science in mind: the role conflicts experienced by persons in organizations. The findings of the study indicate the importance of the problem and the need for further systematic examination of the determinants and effects of role conflict.

Notes and References for Chapter Nine

1. Some researchers have found no differences on reports of role conflict when the reports were obtained through individually administered questionnaires, through questionnaires administered to a group of respondents, or through mailed questionnaires. The method of data collection merits careful attention on the part of the researcher. See Howard J. Ehrlich, James W. Rinehart, and John C. Howell, "The Study of Role Conflict: Explorations in Methodology," Sociometry, 25, 1962, 85-97.

Appendices

Appendix A The Questionnaires[*]

- A-1 Teacher-Parent Conflict
- A-2 Teacher-Administrator Conflict
- A-3 Teacher-Teacher Conflict

Appendix B The Cumulative Scales

- B-1 Exposure to Teacher-Parent Conflict
- B-2 Exposure to Teacher-Administrator Conflict
- B-3 Exposure to Teacher-Teacher Conflict
- B-4 Reaction to Teacher-Parent Conflict
- B-5 Reaction to Teacher-Administrator Conflict
- B-6 Reaction to Teacher-Teacher Conflict
- B-7 Job Satisfaction
- B-8 Worry about Work
- B-9 Level of Career Aspiration

Appendix C Exposure to Role Conflict and Career Aspirations, by Sex of Principal and Level of School

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[*] The system of numbering and ordering the items on the questionnaires differs from the system found in the tables in the text. The questionnaire items are numbered, whereas the items in the text tables are lettered. To facilitate comparison, the appropriate letter is placed directly above the number for each item on the questionnaire. The number of principals giving each response to an item appears directly above the response category.

Instructions RCI

We are now interested in finding out the extent to which principals face situations in which TEACHERS and the PARENTS of students hold different views about how the principal should act. We would like to learn whether you have faced such situations during the past year, and if so, whether they have caused a problem for YOU in your position as principal. In answering Question 4a below please circle the one letter which best represents your particular case.

A = I was exposed to this situation and it was a serious problem for me.
B = I was exposed to this situation and it was a moderate problem for me.
C = I was exposed to this situation and it was a slight problem for me.
D = I was exposed to this situation and it was a very slight problem for me.
E = I was exposed to this situation, but it was not a problem for me.
F = I was not exposed to this situation.

N = This situation could not occur in my type of school.

Question 4a

Have you been exposed to a situation during the past year where TEACHERS and the PARENTS of students held different views about how YOU should act in. . .

	A	B	C	D	E	F	N
D/ 1. handling major disciplinary problems?	34	132	85	52	64	23	11
A/ 2. promoting certain students?	28	101	97	91	78	94	12
E/ 3. grouping students by ability, when assigning them to classes?	19	67	74	92	99	121	29
F/ 4. giving special attention to gifted children?	26	52	81	70	104	146	22
C/ 5. giving special attention to the slow learners?	28	82	63	76	122	20	10
B/ 6. permitting a student to enroll in a course, when his record indicates little chance of success in it?	17	59	69	65	72	89	130
H/ 7. setting uniform grading standards for the school?	33	94	71	52	50	160	41
J/ 8. supervising instruction?	30	64	57	49	61	196	24
G/ 9. setting a school policy on homework?	13	64	77	79	97	152	19
L/ 10. setting up special programs for the "culturally deprived" child?	20	30	31	41	57	238	84
I/ 11. encouraging parents to take part in school activities?	29	80	60	55	96	167	14
K/ 12. deciding on the amount of time you personally devote to working with students?	22	53	60	36	82	226	22

Instructions

RCI

Now please think about possible differences between another pair of groups: TEACHERS and your ADMINISTRATIVE SUPERIOR(S). In answering Question 4b below please circle the one letter which best represents your particular case.

A = I was exposed to this situation and it was a serious problem for me.
B = I was exposed to this situation and it was a moderate problem for me.
C = I was exposed to this situation and it was a slight problem for me.
D = I was exposed to this situation and it was a very slight problem for me.
E = I was exposed to this situation, but it was not a problem for me.
F = I was not exposed to this situation.

N = This situation could not occur in my type of school.

Question 4b

Have you been exposed to a situation during the past year where TEACHERS and your ADMINISTRATIVE SUPERIORS held different views about how YOU should act in. . .

D/ 1. handling major disciplinary problems?	15 A	47 B	36 C	33 D	67 E	279 F	24 N
A/ 2. promoting certain students?	12 A	35 B	33 C	50 D	65 E	286 F	20 N
R/ 3. emphasizing extra-curricular activities?	3 A	19 B	36 C	39 D	74 E	289 F	41 N
E/ 4. grouping students by ability, when assigning them to classes?	11 A	22 B	40 C	40 D	82 E	285 F	21 N
F/ 5. giving special attention to gifted students?	13 A	38 B	30 C	39 D	87 E	271 F	23 N
C/ 6. giving special attention to the slow learner?	17 A	39 B	41 C	42 D	94 E	251 F	17 N
J/ 7. supervising instruction?	9 A	39 B	48 C	52 D	81 E	255 F	17 N
Q/ 8. permitting teacher participation in administrative decision-making?	3 A	22 B	30 C	41 D	93 E	296 F	16 N
N/ 9. assigning teachers to non-teaching duties (such as corridor and lunchroom duty)?	9 A	26 B	49 C	51 D	105 E	237 F	24 N
O/ 10. requiring teachers to perform clerical work (such as making out permanent files)?	10 A	23 B	49 C	53 D	91 E	244 F	31 N
M/ 11. introducing changes into the instructional program?	20 A	50 B	53 C	75 D	93 E	196 F	14 N
G/ 12. setting a school policy in assigning homework?	4 A	19 B	37 C	54 D	76 E	291 F	21 N
P/ 13. assigning teachers to classes they prefer, with due regard for seniority?	10 A	22 B	38 C	52 D	65 E	274 F	40 N
L/ 14. setting up programs for the "culturally deprived" child?	10 A	16 B	16 C	32 D	58 E	305 F	64 N

Instructions

RCI

Now please think about possible differences between one TEACHER (or group of teachers) and another TEACHER (or group of teachers). In answering Question 4c below please circle the one letter which best represents your particular case.

A = I was exposed to this situation and it was a serious problem for me.
B = I was exposed to this situation and it was a moderate problem for me.
C = I was exposed to this situation and it was a slight problem for me.
D = I was exposed to this situation and it was a very slight problem for me.
E = I was exposed to this situation, but it was not a problem for me.
F = I was not exposed to this situation.

N = This situation could not occur in my type of school.

Question 4c

Have you been exposed to a situation during the past year where one TEACHER (or group of teachers) and another TEACHER (or group of teachers) held different views about how YOU should act in. . .

	A	B	C	D	E	F	N
D/ 1. handling major disciplinary problems?	15	57	81	62	85	188	11
E/ 2. grouping students by ability, when assigning them to classes?	11	41	81	70	108	174	16
F/ 3. giving special attention to gifted students?	14	31	55	65	99	220	17
C/ 4. giving special attention to the slow learner?	10	38	49	78	112	203	10
H/ 5. setting uniform grading standards for the school?	24	69	78	68	71	173	18
J/ 6. supervising instruction?	7	27	42	55	79	278	12
Q/ 7. encouraging teacher participation in administrative decision-making?	7	30	51	72	112	219	10
N/ 8. assigning teachers to non-teaching duties (such as corridor and lunchroom duties)?	8	41	68	71	115	181	17
O/ 9. requiring teachers to perform clerical work (such as making out permanent files)?	7	24	53	72	105	215	25
M/ 10. introducing changes into the instructional program?	12	50	65	75	113	176	10
P/ 11. assigning teachers to classes they prefer, with due regard for seniority?	14	29	58	77	95	197	31
T/ 12. devoting time to working with individual teachers?	11	38	43	44	91	260	14
R/ 13. devoting time to the improvement of the curriculum?	13	43	58	57	98	219	13
B/ 14. setting a school policy in assigning homework?	9	23	51	72	105	222	19

Instructions RCI

Please continue by answering Questions 4d and 4e in the same manner.

A = I was exposed to this situation and it was a serious problem for me.
B = I was exposed to this situation and it was a moderate problem for me.
C = I was exposed to this situation and it was a slight problem for me.
D = I was exposed to this situation and it was a very slight problem for me.
E = I was exposed to this situation, but it was not a problem for me.
F = I was not exposed to this situation.

N = This situation could not occur in my type of school.

Question 4d Have you been exposed to a situation during the past year where TEACHERS and STUDENTS held different views about how YOU should act in. . .	(Not analyzed in present study.)
1. emphasizing extra-curricular activities?	A B C D E F N
2. limiting the number of extra-curricular activities in which students are allowed to participate?	A B C D E F N
3. setting school policy on homework assignments?	A B C D E F N
4. setting school policy on student dress?	A B C D E F N
5. handling major disciplinary problems?	A B C D E F N

Question 4e Have you been exposed to a situation during the past year where your FAMILY and your ADMINISTRATIVE SUPERIORS held different views about how YOU should act in. . .	(Not analyzed in present study.)
1. devoting evenings at home to school business?	A B C D E F N
2. attending evening school functions?	A B C D E F N
3. being available to parents after school hours?	A B C D E F N
4. receiving telephone calls from parents at your home?	A B C D E F N
5. devoting weekends to school business?	A B C D E F N
6. entertaining school people at your home?	A B C D E F N

Please continue by answering Question 4f.

RCI

A = I was exposed to this situation and it was a serious problem for me.
B = I was exposed to this situation and it was a moderate problem for me.
C = I was exposed to this situation and it was a slight problem for me.
D = I was exposed to this situation and it was a very slight problem for me.
E = I was exposed to this situation, but it was not a problem for me.
F = I was not exposed to this situation.

N = This situation could not occur in my type of school.

Question 4f

(Not analyzed in present study.)

Have you been exposed to a situation during the past year where your FAMILY and the PARENTS of your students held different views about how YOU should act in . . .

1. devoting evenings at home to school business?	A	B	C	D	E	F	N
2. attending evening school functions?	A	B	C	D	E	F	N
3. being available to parents after school hours?	A	B	C	D	E	F	N
4. receiving telephone calls from parents at your home?	A	B	C	D	E	F	N
5. devoting weekends to school business?	A	B	C	D	E	F	N
6. entertaining school people at your home?	A	B	C	D	E	F	N

Table B-1. Exposure to Teacher-Parent Conflict - Cumulative Scale

A six-item Guttman scale. A high score means frequent exposure to teacher-parent conflict. The coefficient of reproducibility is .934. (All the items and responses are presented in Appendix A-1.)

a. The Items

		Positive Response	Positive Marginal
L.	Setting up special programs for the "culturally deprived" child.	1,2,3,4,5	43%
K.	Deciding on the amount of time you personally devote to working with students.	"	53
J.	Supervising instruction.	"	59
F.	Giving special attention to gifted students.	"	70
C.	Giving special attention to the slow learners.	"	76
A.	Promoting certain students.	"	81

b. The Scale

Scale Score	Frequency	Number of Errors
6	157	35.33
5	71	34.33
4	59	24.67
3	65	34.50
2	36	19.50
1	51	42.67
0	48	--
Total	48	194.00

Coefficient of reproducibility =

$$1 - \frac{194}{487 \times 6} = .934$$

Table B-2. Exposure to Teacher-Administrator Conflict - Cumulative Scale

A four-item H-technique scale. A high score means frequent exposure to teacher-administrator conflict. The coefficient of reproducibility is .970. (All the items and responses are presented in Appendix A-2.)

a. The Items

Contrived Item	Original Items	Positive Response	Positive Marginal	
1	P. Assigning teachers to classes they prefer, with due regard for seniority.	1,2,3,4,5	32%	2/2 positive
	L. Setting up programs for the "culturally deprived" child.	"	30	
2	R. Emphasizing extra-curricular activities.	"	37	2/3 positive
	Q. Permitting teacher participation in administrative decision-making.	"	39	
	G. Setting a school policy in assigning homework.	"	40	
3	C. Giving special attention to the slow learner.	"	48	2/3 positive
	N. Assigning teachers to non-teaching duties.	"	50	
	O. Requiring teachers to perform clerical work.	"	49	
4	M. Introducing changes into the instructional program.	"	60	

Table B-2 (Cont.)

b. The Scale

Scale Score	Frequency	Number of Errors
4	99	10.17
3	74	11.33
2	77	19.83
1	79	19.67
0	166	--
Total	495	61.00

Coefficient of reproducibility =

$$1 - \frac{61}{495 \times 4} = .970$$

Table B-3. Exposure to Teacher-Teacher Conflict - Cumulative Scale

A three-item H-technique scale. A high score means frequent exposure to teacher-teacher conflict. The coefficient of reproducibility is .969. (All the items and responses are presented in Appendix A-3.)

a. The Items

Contrived Item	Original Items	Positive Response	Positive Marginal	
1	J. Supervising instruction	1,2,3,4,5	43%	
2	F. Giving special attention to gifted students.	"	55	2/3 positive
	O. Requiring teachers to perform clerical work.	"	55	
	S. Devoting time to the improvement of the curriculum.	"	55	
3	E. Grouping students by ability, when assigning them to classes.	"	64	2/3 positive
	N. Assigning teachers to non-teaching duties.	"	63	
	M. Introducing changes into the instructional program.	"	64	

b. The Scale

Scale Score	Frequency	Number of Errors
3	203	18.00
2	83	13.50
1	59	14.50
0	149	--
Total	495	46.00

Coefficient of reproducibility =

$$1 - \frac{46}{495 \times 3} = .969$$

Table B-4. Reaction to Teacher-Parent Conflict - Cumulative Scale

A four-item Guttman scale. A high score means the principal reported problems arising as the result of exposure to role conflict. Only response categories 1-5 (see Appendix A-1) are used to describe reaction to a role conflict.

The coefficient of reproducibility is .927.

a. The Items

	Positive Response	Positive Marginal
I. Setting a school policy on homework.	1,2	28%
G. Setting uniform grading standards for the school.	1,2	45
L. Deciding on the amount of time that you personally devote to working with students.	1,2,3	61
H. Supervising instruction	1,2,3,4	76

b. The Scale

Scale Score	Frequency	Number of Errors
4	32	8.5
3	32	14.5
2	44	13.0
1	26	10.0
0	23	--
Total	157	46.0

Coefficient of reproducibility =

$$1 - \frac{46}{157 \times 4} = .927$$

Appendix B-5. Reaction to Teacher-Administrator Conflict - Cumulative Scale

A four-item Guttman scale. A high score means that the principal reported problems arising as the result of exposure to role conflict. Only response categories 1 - 5 (see Appendix A-2) are used to describe reaction to a role conflict.

The coefficient of reproducibility is .936.

a. The Items

		Positive Response	Positive Marginal
C.	Giving special attention to the slow learner.	1,2	28%
F.	Giving special attention to gifted students.	1,2,3	40
Q.	Permitting teacher participation in administrative decision-making.	1,2,3,4	55
M.	Introducing change into the instructional program.	1,2,3,4	74

b. The Scale

Scale Score	Frequency	Number of Errors
4	24	8.5
3	23	6.5
2	30	10.0
1	18	5.0
0	22	--
Total	117	30.0

Coefficient of reproducibility =

$$1 - \frac{30}{117 \times 4} = .936$$

Table B-6. Reaction to Teacher-Teacher Conflict - Cumulative Scale

A four-item Guttman scale. A high score means that the principal reported problems arising as the result of exposure to role conflict. Only response categories 1 - 5 (see Appendix A-3) are used to describe reaction to a role conflict.

The coefficient of reproducibility is .927.

a. The Items

	Positive Response	Positive Marginal
S. Devoting time to the improvement of the curriculum.	1,2	25%
O. Requiring teachers to perform clerical work.	1,2,3	40
D. Handling major disciplinary problems.	1,2,3	52
M. Introducing changes into the instructional program.	1,2,3,4	77

b. The Scale

Scale Score	Frequency	Number of Errors
4	23	10.5
3	34	12.0
2	36	13.5
1	33	8.0
0	23	--
Total	149	44.0

Coefficient of reproducibility =

$$1 - \frac{44}{149 \times 4} = .927$$

Table B-7. Job Satisfaction - Cumulative Scale

A six item Guttman scale. A high score means high satisfaction. The coefficient of reproducibility is .957.

a. The Items

Question: How do you feel about the following items?

Response choices:
1 = Very satisfied
2 = Moderately satisfied
3 = Slightly satisfied
4 = Slightly dissatisfied
5 = Moderately dissatisfied
6 = Very dissatisfied

	Positive Response	Positive Marginal
1. The amount of time made available by my superiors for my personal professional growth.	1	20%
2. The present method employed in this school system for making decisions on curriculum matters.	1	28
3. The evaluation process which my superiors use to judge my effectiveness as a principal.	1	39
4. The manner in which the principals and the higher administration work together in this school system.	1	49
5. The cooperation and help which I receive from my superiors.	1	56
6. The extent to which I am informed by my superiors about school matters affecting my school.	1,2	79

Table B-7 (Cont.)

b. The Scale

Scale Score	Frequency	Number of Errors
6	64	12.5
5	47	12.0
4	67	17.2
3	70	33.3
2	46	28.8
1	119	26.2
0	88	--
Total	501	130.0

Coefficient of reproducibility =

$$1 - \frac{130}{501 \times 6} = .957$$

Table B-8. Worry about Work - Cumulative Scale

A six-item Guttman scale. A high score means frequent worry about work. The coefficient of reproducibility is .907.

a. The Items

Question: To what extent does each of the following occur in your situation?

Response choices:
1 = Very frequently
2 = Frequently
3 = Sometimes
4 = Almost never
5 = Never

	Positive Response	Positive Marginal
1. Worry about what is going on in my school when I am away from it for any length of time during school hours.	1,2	21%
2. Am concerned about the impression I will make when I have to speak to a group of parents.	1,2	27
3. Am concerned about the impression I will make when I have to speak to a group of teachers.	1,2,3	41
4. Worry about what an individual or group may do if I make a decision contrary to their wishes.	1,2,3	63
5. Worry about possible physical injuries to individual students while they are at the school.	1,2,3	72
6. Am kept awake at night thinking about the problems associated with my job.	1,2,3,4	76

Table B-8 (Cont.)

b. The Scale

Scale Score	Frequency	Number of Errors
6	47	50.3
5	73	56.4
4	85	43.7
3	100	52.5
2	74	33.1
1	72	42.1
0	49	--
Total	500	278.0

Coefficient of reproducibility =

$$1 - \frac{278}{500 \times 6} = .907$$

Table B-9. Level of Career Aspiration - Cumulative Scale

A three-item H-technique scale. A high score means a high level of career aspiration. The coefficient of reproducibility is .990.

c. The Items

Question: How desirous are you of doing the following things?

Response choices: 1 = I would not want to
2 = I am not especially anxious to
3 = I have some desire to
4 = I would very much like to
5 = I am extremely anxious to

Contrived Item	Original Items	Positive Responses	Positive Marginal	
1	Obtain a higher administrative position in some other school system.	3,4,5	10%	2/3 positive = 22%
	Obtain a principalship that would carry more prestige than my present position.	3,4,5	26	
	Become an assistant or deputy superintendent in a large city system.	3,4,5	29	
2	Obtain a principalship which would pay more money than my present position.	3,4,5	44	2/3 positive = 52%
	Obtain a higher administrative position in my current school system.	2,3,4,5	54	
	Become an assistant or deputy superintendent of schools in a large city system.	2,3,4,5	58	
3	Obtain a principalship that would carry more prestige than my present position.	2,3,4,5	71	2/3 positive = 81%
	Obtain a higher administrative position in my current school system.	2,3,4,5	80	
	Take a more important role in professional educational organizations.	2,3,4,5	80	

Table B-9 (Cont.)

b. The Scale

Scale Score	Frequency	Number of Errors
3	93	3
2	176	9
1	145	3
0	87	-
Total	501	15

Coefficient of reproducibility =

$$1 - \frac{15}{501 \times 3} = .990$$

Appendix C

Exposure to Role Conflict and Level of Career Aspiration, by Sex of Principal and Level of School

Source of Conflicting Expectations	Degree of Exposure (Scale Score)	Level of Career Aspiration (mean scale score)									
		Women				Men					
		Elementary	(N)	Secondary	(N)	Elementary	(N)	Junior High	(N)	Senior High	(N)
Teachers and Parents	Low (0-2)	0.90	(41)	1.30	(13)	1.54	(24)	1.91	(32)	1.72	(25)
	Medium (3-5)	0.81	(26)	1.08	(12)	1.98	(40)	1.85	(54)	1.65	(63)
	High (6)	1.14	(21)	2.00	(3)	1.58	(31)	1.74	(42)	1.53	(60)
Teachers and Administrators	Low (0-1)	0.90	(41)	0.84	(13)	1.69	(32)	1.79	(39)	1.75	(40)
	Medium (2-3)	0.93	(27)	1.44	(9)	1.85	(34)	1.95	(38)	1.54	(48)
	High (4)	1.04	(25)	2.00	(6)	1.68	(31)	1.83	(48)	1.57	(15)
Disagreements within the Teacher Group	Low (0)	0.85	(51)	1.43	(16)	1.64	(33)	1.85	(47)	1.54	(48)
	Medium (1-2)	1.09	(22)	1.20	(5)	1.86	(28)	1.85	(33)	1.70	(30)
	High (3)	1.00	(18)	1.05	(7)	1.74	(35)	1.79	(47)	1.61	(74)